The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite

Heather Sutherland

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THE COLONIAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE JAVANESE *PRIYAYI*

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THE MAKING OF A BUREAUCRATIC ELITE

The Colonial Transformation of the Javanese *Priyayi*

HEATHER SUTHERLAND

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PREFACE

The original impulse behind this book was a desire to study the colonial career of Java's local administrative dynasties, the great *priyayi* families. It was soon apparent that such a study demanded not only detailed research into the specifics of bureaucratic development in the Dutch East Indies, but also an awareness of wider theoretical issues. For the minutiae of biographical detail and government regulations provide data for the consideration of much larger questions concerning the nature of traditional polities, the effects of colonial rule, and the patterns underlying political institutions in newly independent nations.

The ideological framework for European evaluation of Asian states evolved gradually, formed by the 18th century ideas of Montesquieu and Adam Smith, by early 19th century English studies of India, by Hegel and Marx, as well as by romantics and imperialist apologists.[1] The Dutch in Java shared contemporary ideas about 'Oriental Despotism', and about autonomous, egalitarian village communities. They also had their own pragmatic heritage, born of the Netherlands East India Company's first contact with a Malayo-Polynesian society in 17th century Formosa. There they developed several key notions: that as conquerors they had a 'feudal' right to the land, and hence to taxation, and that the best and cheapest solution to problems of political and economic control was to use specialist middle-men – higher native chiefs and Chinese tax-farmers.[2]

In this context of belief Java was seen as a corrupt feudal society whose highly wrought culture and complex semi-bureaucratic courts required animation by European dynamism before the land could be rendered truly productive. The static Oriental state could be made to generate the goods and services demanded by the Netherlands, but there should be no endangering its essential – and useful – passivity. So no innovation, no creative political response to social and economic change could be tolerated by colonial dogma. The effects of this enforced stagnation were later to feed new images of exotic Java, in which a *priyayi* elite was seen to be, by nature, more concerned with mysticism and the enactment of ritual than with the hard exercise of power. After World War II, when the colonial straitjacket was removed, the luxuriant 'irrationality' of Javanese culture flowered again in the political sphere, where old ideas of power and appropriate behaviour were subsequently identified as resurgent patrimonialism and neo-traditionalism.[3]

[1] P. Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State* (London, c. 1974) pp. 462-495.

[2] W.A. Ginsel, *De Gereformeerde Kerk op Formosa of de Lotgevallen eener Handelskerk onder de Oost-Indische-Compagnie, 1672-1662* (Leiden, 1931).

[3] A.R. Willner, 'The neotraditional accommodation to political independence: the case of Indonesia' in L.W. Pye (ed.), *Cases in Comparative Politics: Asia* (Boston, 1970) pp. 247-306; B.R.O'G. Anderson, 'The languages of Indonesian politics', *Indonesia*, 1 (1966) pp. 95-101; Anderson, 'Japan: "The light of Asia"' in J. Silverstein (ed.), *Southeast Asia in World War II: Four Essays* (New Haven, 1966) pp. 20-1; Anderson, 'The idea of power in Javanese culture' in C. Holt (ed.), *Culture and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca, 1972) pp. 33-8.

These views of Java range from culturally bound myths to academic hypotheses. Their testing and further development require sharply focused examinations of specific relationships and institutions, so that the sociological links and structural limitations shaping both continuity and change can be further defined. This book investigates the effects of administrative change upon the social and political role of the *priyayi* elite in an attempt to trace the complex reality behind such dichotomies as 'traditional' and 'modern', 'rational' and 'patrimonial', even the apparently straightforward 'administrative' and 'political'.

In the course of the narrative it becomes clear how Dutch beliefs about the Asian nature of the Javanese polity combined with their short term practical goals to distort the relationship between *priyayi* and peasantry. Independent chiefs and court officials were transformed into subordinate allies, compradors, and ultimately into political and bureaucratic instruments of an alien regime. In the process the *priyayi* lost their military functions and were restricted in their economic activity; they became dependent more upon the new power in Batavia than upon their ability to work with local forces. Bound by colonial constraints, unable to respond vigorously to economic and related social change, the native officials of the late 19th century were an uprooted elite whose refined and over-elaborate cultural life was probably more a result of impotence than of specifically Javanese traits.

During the following discussion of the often hypocritical relationship between European and indigenous civil servants, it emerges that in the East Indian colonial administration evasion, sycophancy and pretence were often the most rational modes of behaviour, while initiative and drive were dangerous. Awareness of such conditioning helps explain much of the malfunctioning of independent Indonesia's bureaucracy. Another legacy of Dutch domination was the ambiguity surrounding the boundary between the political and the administrative. Colonial use of the civil service as a technocratic oligarchy, overriding the popular will be virtue of its problem-solving competence and assumed impartiality, created a climate in which political manipulation by government officials was natural and necessary. The economic rationalizations of the post-1965 New Order in Indonesia recall the narrow drive towards productivity of the colonial *Beamtenstaat*.

Several more specific themes run through this study. There is the continuing weight given to personal relationships, to the patron-client ties which shaped factions and family networks and were a decisive influence on professional behaviour. Another repeated motif is the use of ostensibly traditional customs by the colonial regime; Dutch perceptions and reinterpretations were often more rigid than Javanese reality. The theme of the symbolic and repressive use of *priyayi* also recurs. More narrowly, details are provided of administrative reform, with its growing stress on expertise, but this is linked to changing leadership patterns both within the native civil service and the wider society.

This account of Java's elite is limited to the professional administrative corps of the directly ruled areas. The four native states under indirect rule in south Central Java and the major municipalities are not considered; they demand specialist studies of their own. For similar reasons the intricate and little documented relationships between Chinese and officials, between aristocratic *priyayi* and village society, receive only general attention. This book examines the indigenous colonial officials within a Java-wide, institutionally defined framework, and it is hoped that this will contribute both to an understanding of Indonesian history and of the colonial experience in general. The research for the book also demonstrated the need for more investigation of local and economic history, and more comparative studies between ex-colonial and developing states, so that while the present study may clarify aspects of Java's development and place them in a wider context, the conclusions and suggestions given here should be followed through in further work.

*

The native civil service was the effective link between the mass of the people and the Netherlands regime; and the functioning of this link is of primary importance in understanding the relationship between colonial government and rural population. Moreover, the corps was the sustainer and guardian of indigenous aristocratic traditions; it was a continuation of the old governing class and a major source of Java's modern elite. As such, it played an important part in Indonesian social and political history, but despite this self-evident fact it has received very little attention.

Several articles have been written surveying the relationship between the Dutch and the native officials, particularly the high-ranking Regents. J.S. Furnivall, Rupert Emerson and Clive Day include some discussion of the indigenous corps in their classic books; Harry J. Benda has analyzed the administration in the closing years of Dutch rule; B.J.O. Schrieke and Leslie Palmier have traced fluctuations in officials' status; while Clifford Geertz's work on contemporary Java has elaborated the concept of the *priyayi*, the sophisticated administrative elite.[4] But very little has been written about the institutional evolution of the native civil service, or about its changing role in Javanese society.

The sources used in this book reflect the need to consider both traditional and colonial elements in the corps' development. The main documentary basis comes from the former Netherlands Colonial Ministry's archives, now kept in The Hague, while other Dutch libraries and collections also provided a wealth of information. A less obvious but also invaluable source was a series of interviews

[4] J.S. Furnivall, *Netherlands India: A Study of Plural Economy (Cambridge, 1944);* C. Day, *The Dutch in Java* (reprint Kuala Lumpur, 1966); R. Emerson, *Malaysia: a Study in Direct and Indirect Rule* (reprint Kuala Lumpur, 1964); H.J. Benda, 'The pattern of administrative reforms in the closing years of Dutch rule in Indonesia', *Journal of Asian Studies,* 25, iv (1966) pp. 589-605; C.J. Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Glencoe, 1960).

conducted in Java from October 1969 until June 1970. These discussions with former officials and their families were important not so much for the factual information they provided, as for the perspectives they offered on the role of the native officials. The interviews, like the contemporary Indonesian publications consulted, help balance the biases in the colonial documents and periodicals.

I am indebted to many individuals who showed great patience and kindness in helping me with my research. In Amsterdam, Mr A. van Marle and Dr G.F. Pijper generously made some of their own material on Indonesia available to me, as did R. Abdulkadir Widjojoatmodjo of Rijswijk. In Jakarta, so many people gave so much of their time to helping me that it is impossible to do justice to them all, but particular mention must be made of Paramita Abdurrachman, Professor Prajudi Atmosoedirdjo, Dr Soetardjo Kartohadikoesoemo, Abdul Wahab Surjodiningrat SH, Rachmat Suronegoro and Zainal A. Widjojoatmodjo. Similar gratitude should also be expressed to those who helped me elsewhere in Java: in Bandung, Ibu Soediman, RM Abdoelmoetalip and his wife, and RAA Abas Soeria Nata Atmadja; in Malang, Soemarsaid Moertono and the Suleimanhadis; in Salatiga, RMAA Tjondronegoro; and in Surabaya, Bapak Samadikoen and Mr Abdul Gafar Pringgodigdo. I must also record my appreciation of the Tarekat family's warm hospitality, which made my stay with them in Jakarta so relaxed and pleasant.

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Heather Sutherland

June 1978 Amsterdam

PANCASILA

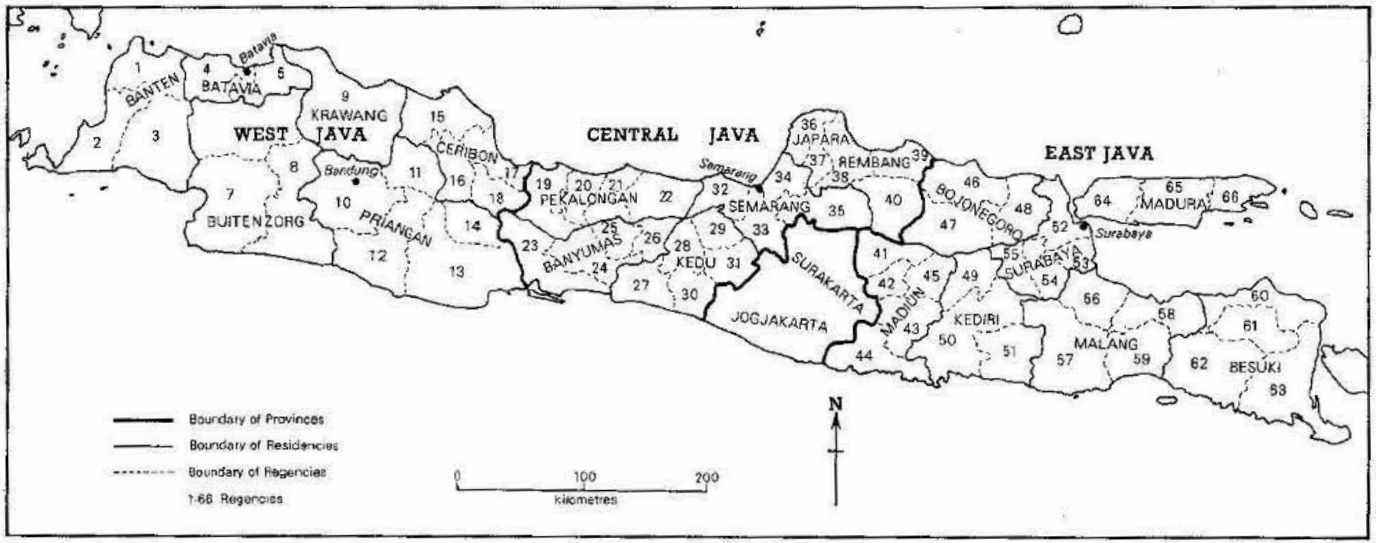
KETUHANAN YANG MAHA ESA

KEMANUSIAAN YANG ADIL DAN BERADAB

PERSATUAN INDONESIA

KERAKYATAN YANG DIPIMPIN OLEH HIKMAT KEBIJAK-SANAAN DALAM PERMUSYAWARATAN / PERWAKILAN

KEADILAN SOSIAL BAGI SELURUH RAKYAT INDONESIA


WEST JAVA
CENTRAL JAVA
EAST JAVA
BANTEN
BATAVIA
Batavia
KRAWANG
CERIBON
Bandung
PRIANGAN
BUITENZORG
PEKALONGAN
Semarang
SEMARANG
JAPARA
REMBANG
BOJONEGORO
MADURA
Surabaya
BANYUMAS
KEDU
SURAKARTA
JOGJAKARTA
SURABAYA
MADIUN
KEDIRI
MALANG
BESUKI
Boundary of Provinces
Boundary of Residencies
Boundary of Regencies
1-66 Regencies
0
100
200
kilometres
N

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS IN JAVA, 1937.

I. Province of West Java

a) Banten Residency

1. Serang Regency
2. Pandeglang
3. Lebak

b) Batavia Residency

4. Batavia
5. Mr. Cornelis

c) Buitenzorg Residency

6. Buitenzorg
7. Sukabumi
8. Cianjur

d) Krawang Residency

9. Krawang

e) Priangan Residency

10. Bandung
11. Sumedang
12. Garut
13. Tasikmalaya
14. Ciamis

f) Ceribon Residency

15. Indramayu
16. Majalengka
17. Ceribon
18. Kuningan

II. Province of Central Java

g) Pekalongan Residency

19. Brebes
20. Tegal
21. Pemalang
22. Pekalongan

h) Banyumas Residency

23. Cilacap
24. Banyumas
25. Purbolinggo
26. Banjarnegara

i) Kedu Residency

27. Kebumen
28. Wonosobo
29. Temanggung
30. Purworejo
31. Magelang

j) Semarang Residency

32. Kendal
33. Salatiga
34. Demak
35. Grobogan

k) Japara-Rembang Residency

36. Japara
37. Kudus
38. Pati
39. Rembang
40. Blora

III. Province of East Java

l) Madiun Residency

41. Ngawi
42. Magetan
43. Ponorogo
44. Pacitan
45. Madiun

m) Bojonegoro Residency

46. Tuban
47. Bojonegoro
48. Lamongan

n) Kediri Residency

49. Kediri
50. Tulungagung
51. Blitar

o) Surabaya Residency

52. Surabaya
53. Sidoarjo
54. Mojokerto
55. Jombang

p) Malang Residency

56. Pasuruan
57. Malang
58. Probolinggo
59. Lumajang

q) Besuki Residency

60. Panarukan
61. Bondowoso
62. Jember
63. Banyuwangi

r) Madura Residency

64. Bangkalan
65. Pamekasan
66. Sumenep

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1. Raden Tumenggung Danoeningrat III (Regent of Magelang 1862-1879), c. 1871.

2. Raden Adipati Ario Tjondronegoro (Regent of Serang 1849-1874), c. 1865.

3. Regent and Family.

4. Raden Mas Tumenggung Tjokronegoro III (Regent of Blora 1886-1913) with his family, c. 1900. Note the emphasis on the European style of his children.

5. Regent of Blora on *tournée.*

6. The *pendopo* of the Regent of Rangkasbitung; the figures in the foreground are *oppasser,* messengers and official henchmen of *Pangreh Praja* officials.

7. Inauguration of the Garut Regency Council, 1926.

8. Chairman and Members of the Sumedang Regency Council, late 1920s.

All illustrations courtesy of the KITLV, Leiden.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMS	*Algemene middelbare school,* General Secondary School
ARA	*Algemeen Rijksarchief,* (Netherlands) General State Archives
BAKN	*Badan Administrasi Kepegawaian Negeri,* State Body for Civil Service Administration
BB	*Binnenlandsch Bestuur* (modern spelling: *Binnenlands Bestuur*), Interior Administration, European Civil Service
BKI	*Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde,* Contributions to Linguistics, Geography and Ethnography (periodical)
BU	*Budi Utomo,* an early native political association
DIA	Department of Interior Administration
DPD	*Dewan Pemerintah Daerah,* (Indonesian executive) Regional Government Council
DPR	*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat,* (Indonesian) People's Representative Council
DPRD	*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah,* (Indonesian) Regional People's Representative Council
ELS	*Europeesche lagere school,* European elementary school
GG	Governor-General
HBS	*Hoogere burgerschool,* Citizens High School, Dutch secondary school
HIS	*Hollandsch-inlandsch school,* Dutch Native School
IP	*Indisch Partij,* Indies Party
IPO	*Inlandsche Pers Overzicht,* or *Overzicht van de Inlandsche en Maleisch-Chineesche Pers,* Review of the Native and Malay-Chinese Press
ISDV	*Indische Sociaal Democratische Vereeniging,* Indies Social Democratic Association
KITLV	*Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde,* Royal Institute for Linguistics, Geography and Ethnography
LAN	*Lembaga Administrasi Negeri,* State Administrative Institute
M	*Mas,* a title
MOSVIA	*Middelbaar Opleiding School voor Inlandsche Ambtenaren,* Secondary Training School for Native Officials
mr.	*mail rapport,* official report kept in archives

MULO	*Meer Uitgebreide Lagere Onderwijs,* Extended Primary Education, junior high school
MvO	*Memorie van Overgave,* Transfer Memorandum, general report prepared by official before being transferred, for the benefit of his successor
NICA	Netherlands Indies Civil Administration, in post 1945 Indonesia
NIVB	*Nederlandsch-Indische Vrijzinnige Bond,* Dutch-Indian Liberal Association
OIBA	*Ongediplomeerde Inlandsche Bestuursambtenaren Bond,* Association of Non-diplomated Native Administrative Officials
OOB	*Oud Osvianen Bond,* OSVIA Old Boys Association
OSVIA	*Opleiding School voor Inlandsche Ambtenaren,* Training School for Native Officials
PEB	*Politiek Economische Bond,* Political Economic Association
PID	*Politieke Inlichtingen Dienst,* Political Intelligence Service
PKI	*Partai Komunis Indonesia,* Indonesian Communist Party
PNI	*Partai Nasional Indonesia,* Indonesian Nationalist Party
PPBB	*Perhimpoenan* (or *Perkoempoelan*) *Pegawai Bestuur Boemipoetra,* Association of Native Administrative Officials
PVPN	*Persatoean Vakbonden Pegawai Negeri,* Union of Officials' Trade Unions
R	*Raden,* a title
RA	*Raden Adipati* or *Raden Ario,* a title
RM	*Raden Mas,* a title
RT	*Raden Toemenggoeng* (or *Tumenggung*), a title
SI	*Sarekat Islam,* Islamic Association, an early Indonesian movement
SSKDN	*Serikat Sekerdja Kementerian Dalam Negeri,* Union of the Ministry of Internal Affairs
STOVIA	*School tot Opleiding van Inlandsche Artsen,* School for Training of Native Doctors
TBB	*Tijdschrift voor het Binnenlandsch Bestuur,* Periodical for the Interior Administrative Service
Vaib	*Vereeniging van Ambtenaren bij den Inlandschen Bestuursdienst,* Movement of Officials in the Native Administrative Service
Vb	*Verbaal,* file of documents in archives
VOC	*Vereenigde Oost Indische Compagnie,* United (Dutch) East India Company

GLOSSARY

Adipati	high title
alun-alun	central square of Javanese town
ambtenaar	official, usually salaried and appointed by the Dutch
Ario	high title
Assistant *Wedana*	see *Camat*
batik	Javanese patterned cloth
beamtenstaat	a state controlled by officialdom
Binnenlandsch Bestuur	Interior Administration, the European civil service (BB) in colonial Java
Bupati	Regent, highest native administrative official in Dutch-ruled areas of Java
Camat	Assistant *Wedana,* lower level native official between *Wedana* and village heads
Controleur	Dutch official below Assistant Resident
dokter jawa	native medical orderly or native doctor, with lower qualifications than a European doctor
dwifungsi	'two functions', i.e. civil and military role of the Indonesian Army
dukun	Javanese healer
Ethici	proponent of the welfare-oriented post-1900 'Ethical' colonial policy
gamelan	Javanese orchestra
gewest	region; specifically, Residency
gewestelijke raden	residency councils
Golkar	*Golongan Karya* — Functional Groups, abbreviated name for Indonesian political organization supported by post-1965 government
groot ambtenaarsexamen	high officials' examination, qualification for European civil service
Gusti	lord
hoofd	chief
hoofdenschool	chief's school

hormat	respect, especially used for the use of deference forms, prescribed clothing, language or behaviour used in the civil service by subordinates to superiors
Indische	of the Indies; syncretist or mixed European and indigenous
Indo	Indo-European, Eurasian
jago	'cock', charismatic, tough and often violent local leader
jaksa	native legal official
jalan jongkok	humble, crouching walk
Kabupaten	(i) Regent's residence, (ii) Regency
kafir	non-Muslim, 'infidel'
Kangeng	Lord, respectful form of address
Kepala Daerah	Regional head in Indonesia, i.e. Governor, Resident, Regent
kiyayi	respected elder man, particularly of Islamic learning
klein ambtenaarsexamen	petty officials' examination, qualification for the lower levels of government employment
kraton	palace, residential compound of ruler
kris	Javanese sword or dagger
ksatriya	knight-like figure in Indian or Javanese tradition
lurah	village head
magang	apprentice, unpaid clerk
Mas	low *priyayi* title
Mantri	low level native official with specific function e.g. *Mantri Polisi*, native police official.
mestizo	mixed, syncretist blend of native and European elements
mono-loyalitas	exclusive loyalty
ngoko	low Javanese used to inferiors, people of the same rank or intimates
ningrat	idiomatic term for the aristocracy, many of whose names end in '*ningrat*'

nyuwita	apprenticing a boy or youth in early adolescence to a high official or family to learn social skills etc., from *suwita*
ontvoogding	'detutelization', 'deguardianizing', the process of liberating the native officials from intensive European supervision and control
pamong praja	civil service in Java after 1946
Pangeran	high native title
Pangreh Praja	'Rulers of the realm', Java's colonial native civil service in the areas under direct Dutch rule
pasisir	the coastal region, particularly the north Java littoral
Patih	native chief minister of Regent or ruler
pendopo	pavilion in front of Regent's house
peranakan	locally born, syncretist or acculturated Chinese or European who has accommodated to local society
pesantren	Islamic school
priyayi	aristocrat or official, member of the governing elite of Java; characteristics of that class
pusaka	heirloom, spiritually potent regalia or possessions such as weapons, musical instruments, cloth etc.
Raden	*priyayi* title
Raden Ajeng	aristocratic title for unmarried Javanese girl such as a Regent's daughter
Resident	Dutch Colonial official, between Governor and Assistant Resident
rust en orde	peace and order
santri	devout Muslim, self-consciously non-syncretist
selir	secondary wife
sembah	gesture of obeisance with hands held before face
sumbangan	contributions, e.g. of the villagers to officials
Sunan	from Susuhunan, the ruler of Surakarta
Susuhunan	ruler of Surakarta

suwita	see *nyuwita*
taakverdeeling	the 'allocation of tasks', redivision of work between native and European officials, particularly that of 1931
tournée	tour of duty performed regularly by officials
Tumenggung	title, usually of Regent
ulama	religious teachers and scholars
volkshoofd	traditional chief, man whose authority is held to derive from his status in indigenous society, in contrast to an *ambtenaar*, official
Volksraad	People's Council
vorst	prince, ruler
Vorstenlanden	Principalities, the four indirectly ruled states of Central Java
wayang	puppet theatre
Wedana	district chief, native official in charge of district under the supervision of Regent and *Patih*
wong cilik	the 'little people', the common people

CHAPTER 1
POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PATTERNS

Late colonial Java's native civil service bore an impressive name: *Pangreh Praja*, the 'Rulers of the Realm'. But this title, with its suggestions of pride and power, is at once justified and sadly inaccurate. For if in the indigenous context the officials were *Pangreh Praja*, to the Dutch they were the *inlandsch bestuur*, the 'native administration', the lower level of local government. The native officials were a feared and admired ruling class, but they were also the subordinate agents of an alien regime. Depending on context, they were ineffectual or all powerful. They bridged the gap between the dominant European caste, with its overriding economic and political interests, and the peasantry; they were the link with the independent kingdoms of Java's past, and with the new demands and possibilities of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As such, they were both clients and a ruling elite, political chiefs and colonial officials. Their ambivalent connecting role was also very vulnerable to change, and during the last fifty or sixty years of Dutch rule the *Pangreh Praja* was transformed, in the administrative, social and political facets of its manifold role.

As an administrative service the *Pangreh Praja* developed considerably during this period, from a collection of rather untidy local networks into a single carefully graded hierarchy of about fifteen hundred career officials. It would be possible to describe this transformation as a straightforward affair; the transition from patrimonial to rational bureaucracy proceeding along a logical sequence of reforms in recruitment, training, promotion procedure and functional specialization. But this would be quite misleading. For even within the most narrowly defined limits such a process confronts the student with complex questions. Who, for example, is to define what is 'traditional' or 'rational'? What is the relationship between form and content? How far did structural change generate new values; to what extent did new attitudes develop within the confines of persisting indigenous institutions?

Moreover, it is impossible to separate administrative evolution from changes in the wider society. New groups and interests demand new services and even a neutrally technocratic bureaucracy – as the executive arm of government – forms the main link between rulers and ruled. In Java this connective role was both crucial and difficult, complicated as it was by the nature of the colonial relationship and, from the later nineteenth century on, by rapid social change within the native community.

It has been suggested that the Dutch East Indies were a *Beamtenstaat*, an apolitical state where policy was 'primarily an instrument for the implementation not of competing social demands, but of "sound administration" per se'.[1] It is true that central government in the Indies meant bureaucracy, and that officials

[1] H.J. Benda, 'The pattern of administrative reforms', p. 589.

in general reserved the right to monopolize decision making. But the officials were not isolated in Olympian detachment. Dutch Java's administration was always an actively interventionist political force, both as an instrument supporting the colonial regime and as a diversity of interest groups, determinedly defending their elite positions.

It is necessary to see the *Pangreh Praja* as heirs to the local rulers of pre-colonial days and also as agents of the Netherlands government; they were neither exclusively the one nor the other, but both. The colonial relationship was an unequal political partnership, the essential hinge of which was the sustained contact between the European civil service, the BB (*Binnenlands Bestuur*, Interior administration), and the *Pangreh Praja*. Their interaction was not simply that of administration superior and inferior, but was also a continuing bargaining between elites of two races and of two cultures. Each group had its own vested interests, its own traditions and received wisdom, its own values, perceptions and prejudices. So not only must the colonial regime and the bureaucratic functioning of the civil services be considered, but also the cultural and intellectual bases of BB and *Pangreh Praja*.

As long as Javanese society was relatively stable, the *modus vivendi* developed by Dutch and indigenous officials over more than a century was able to absorb local shocks of economic change and sporadic unrest. But in the later nineteenth century intensified economic involvement, closer contact with Europe and westernization in the growing towns, all began to change both the life-style and attitudes of officials, and their professional concerns. Bureaucratic standardization and reform became urgent issues, reaching their peak in major regulations between 1910 and 1915. This coincided with the appearance of new native leadership groups which challenged the social and political hegemony of Java's aristocratic governing class, the *priyayi*. Awareness of social and political changes encouraged both progressive Dutchmen and the increasingly well educated Javanese elite to demand greater responsibilities for the *Pangreh Praja*.

But The Hague and Batavia, centres of Dutch government authority, were unresponsive to such demands. After an initial period of 'Ethical' patronage of young natives, who were intended to evolve into a nuclear group of Dutch-minded leaders, the twentieth century colonial regime turned first cool and then hostile towards both progressive officials and the emerging nationalist movement. Defence of the status quo became the overriding consideration. This was not only seen as a necessity – based on the assumption that all political growth by the native community posited a contraction of Dutch power – but it was also an article of faith. There were certain conservative conceptions of the colonial relationship, of native social and political potential, of what was appropriate, which militated against an integrated evolution of Indies society and helped produce racial polarization.

These beliefs emerge clearly in debates over administrative development during the period from the late nineteenth century up to the Japanese occupation

of 1942. They are embodied in arguments over the significance of the *priyayi* as *volkshoofd*, or 'popular chief', enjoying the unforced reverence of the people. They underlie the '*hormat*-question', on the role of indigenous etiquette, and they aborted or crippled attempts at administrative reform. Because of the lack of consensus between Dutch and Javanese the former felt compelled to use the *Pangreh Praja* as a prop for the colonial state and as a weapon against new political groups. This same lack of consensus and communication encouraged that insensitivity to possible change which forced both colonial government and administration into sterility. The more progressive native officials rebelled against this enforced stagnation, moving through disillusionment into politicization, but there was nothing they could do as they were denied all opportunities.

This study of the *Pangreh Praja*, then, focuses upon the evolution of the native corps within its historical, political and social contexts, taking into account the cultural and colonial restraints which governed its development.

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The roots of the *Pangreh Praja* reached back far into Java's history, into the political and social patterns of early indigenous states and the later VOC (*Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, Dutch East India Company 1602-1800). Their predecessors ranged from subservient rural headmen to powerful local princes and the officials of great courts such as Banten and Cirebon in West Java or, above all, Central Java's Mataram. All these powers, particularly expansionist seventeenth century Mataram, had to combat strong centrifugal tendencies. Regular rebellions threatened the disintegration of the realm, drawing their support from strong regional feeling and finding their usual political focus in parochial religious leaders or, more dangerously, ambitious local lords. The *Pangreh Praja's* ancestors were both the rebel leaders and their opponents, the capital's officials.

It is difficult to define the units and relationships of the early Javanese polity. There was no rigid vassal hierarchy, no clear cut distinction between central and local sources of power. A headman whose family had dominated a rural area for generations could use this base to achieve high office at the centre, while a royal official sent out to govern a province might build himself up into a regional ruler. Poor communications, a goods economy and limited bureaucratic expertise hindered centralization. The state's interference in village life was slight, providing that the flow of produce and, when necessary, man-power, worked its way up the hierarchy of headmen, chiefs and officials. Court, aristocracy, administration and local authorities lived off this produce, each drawing his own before sending the prescribed dues to the higher levels. In return, they offered – in theory – security and the maintenance of such essential infrastructures as roads and major irrigation works.

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There were parallels between this indigenous administration and the nineteenth century colonial civil service, between Mataram and the European corps as well as with the *Pangreh Praja*, for the similarities derived from the administrative structure rather than any specifically 'Oriental' psychology. Mataram government has been described as follows:

> State administration was intrinsically primitive in character. The importance of physical power apparent in the idolization of *ksatrija*-ship, 'Knighthood', the simplicity of administration with its repetitive schema of identical structures, the non-differentiation of functions in leader positions, the autonomous self-sufficiency of function, very obvious in the system of finance: all these factors reveal the basic simplicity of structure of the later Mataram state.

The author Soemarsaid Moertono also comments on the 'great personal responsibility and power of each position in the hierarchy'.[2]

With some qualification this could stand as a description of the colonial administration, particularly before 1870, but also in broad outline up to the end of the century. The main modifications were in the influence of the *ksatriya* (Indian 'knight') idea. This ideal had never particularly appealed to the Dutch, while within the *priyayi* corps – which had lost its traditional military functions – the ideal was transformed by a decreasing emphasis on power and an increasing stress on service and self-sacrifice. Moreover, Batavia introduced a centrally funded, salaried administration. But the overall structure remained much the same: a pyramid of territorial units under officials with wide and generalized powers, loose definitions of duties, a strong emphasis on rank differences, while relationships were personal and often arbitrary.

Moertono also noted the problems Mataram faced in trying to integrate the state, and the usefulness of intermarriage, personal relationships, and *esprit de corps* in overcoming them. Similarly, both BB and *Pangreh Praja* cultivated personal clients and patrons, and had a very strong sense of corporate identity and pride – if not arrogance. Within the *priyayi* world this was reinforced by the self-identification of the native officials with the best in Javanese culture. The ethos of Javanese states drew heavily on Indian traditions and had produced a considerable body of literature concerning the rights and duties of the ruler. A strong religious emphasis permeated political theory: harmony in the kingdom, a pure and wise ruler, meant that the social and supra-human orders were in equilibrium. The role of king, court and government was to maintain and strengthen this connection between the human and the spiritual, to concentrate energy and power, bringing these abstract forces into the service of the state. This non-rational stress on the religious, the mystical and the moral formed a lasting strand in *priyayi* culture and concepts of political behaviour.

[2] S. Moertono, *State and Statecraft in Old Java* (Ithaca, 1968) p. 120.

It is impossible to understand *Pangreh Praja* values without taking into account continuing beliefs in supra-human aspects of life and government. Such attitudes shaped the relationship between the common people and the elite. In most areas of Java there were local beliefs which had to be respected; in South Coast Regencies Nyai Loro Kidul, Goddess of the South Seas, was a potent force, while mountains such as Kelud in Kedu, Lawu between Surakarta and Madiun, or Semeru, were the foci of strongly rooted regional traditions. The graves of famous people were similarly revered, and everywhere there were forces which could not be ignored. Families also had to regulate their own spiritual life; certain places, food and clothing patterns were to be avoided, there were people with whom one could not marry, while *pusaka*, sacred heirlooms, contained concentrated spiritual power.

Belief in the possibility of working with transcendental forces was virtually universal among the Javanese, and the cultivation of power by mystical exercises was very common, a hallmark of *priyayi* culture. The relationship with the supra-human order was a fundamental element in legitimizing traditions which clustered around *priyayi* families just as they did about ruling dynasties. Legends and anecdotes about the spiritual power of earlier *priyayi*, stories of miraculous feats and divine intervention, or about the ability to curse enemies and heal the sick, recur in family traditions just as they do in *kraton* (palace) chronicles. The old families had their sacred *kris* (Javanese dagger), spears, musical instruments, cloths and books; they too had genealogies linking them to the rulers of ancient Java, to early Islamic Saints and ultimately to the gods.

Moral and religious aspects of government were strongly emphasized by the native officials. A good official was in accord with his spiritual, physical and social environments. Indeed, it would be difficult to maintain any sort of stability and well-being if this essential harmony did not exist. Should some natural disaster occur, such as a flood, eruption, or widespread crop failure, then the *priyayi* were often held responsible: they had obviously failed to maintain the proper balance. If an official was plagued by bad luck, then his authority would be eroded as people lost confidence in his right to govern. Even after the spread of 'rational' Dutch education during the early twentieth century a strong sense of the spiritual demands of office remained, although among the most westernized it may have been expressed more as a sense of vocation and dedication than in explicitly mystical or religious terms.[3]

But to European merchants and political agents such beliefs were both abstruse and irrelevant. Their guiding principle was that of buying cheap and selling dear; indigenous political structures were simply available instruments they could use in pursuit of this aim. Mataram's government, a loosely integrated, concentric system, was permeable to VOC penetration. During the 17th and 18th

[3] On Javanese political thought, see Moertono; also B.R.O'G. Anderson, 'The idea of power in Javanese culture' in C. Holt (ed.), *Culture and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca, 1972) pp. 1-69.

centuries the north Java coast or *pasisir* and Batavia (Jakarta) emerged as centres of European trade, while the need to guarantee security and access led to the establishment of Dutch hegemony over the mountainous Priangan, the island of Madura and the extreme east of Java.

The Company's servants did not overtly challenge Mataramese or local values, they had no wish to tear down the existing order. On the contrary, they wished to preserve and use it, so the threat they posed lay not so much in opposition, but in the eroding effects of co-option. The VOC, like the subsequent colonial state, maintained that they preserved the indigenous political structure: their motto was 'like over like'; they ruled the people 'through their own chiefs'. It was merely, they thought, a matter of placing themselves at the receiving end of the flow of goods and siphoning off a share for export. They made the local chiefs into their agents and, drawing on Dutch history, they called them 'Regents'.

Use of existing institutions was necessary, for the Company was militarily weak, parsimonious and anxious to avoid arousing local enmity. It remained peripheral to the main Javanese courts of Surakarta and Yogyakarta, created by the 1755 division of Mataram. But in the areas where it was most heavily involved, the coffee producing Priangan and the *pasisir* ports, the impact of the VOC was considerable. Where they were strong enough, its agents used the Regents to extract labour and produce with an unprecedented and sustained intensity. They geared the system towards their own interests, and, as aliens, they disturbed the cultural consensus and power equilibrium previously maintained by shared values and techniques. Nonetheless, they worked within the indigenous political pattern, manipulating and being manipulated. VOC employees made judicious use of diplomacy, intrigue and – when unavoidable – small scale military operations, usually in alliance with some native chief. They participated in the internal politics of the aristocracy, securing allies and working against opponents.

By the late eighteenth century Company influence extended over much of Java. The Governor General in Batavia controlled its extensive environs and Priangan, while the *pasisir* was under the powerful Governor of the North East Coast, based in Semarang. The west Javanese rulers of Banten and Cirebon had become VOC vassals. East Java, with its capital in Surabaya, was also subject to the Dutch. These high Company officials had their European subordinates – Residents, Commandants and crop-overseers – distributed in the Residencies and Regencies of the VOC territories. This pattern of regional administration was linked both to the preceding indigenous system on which it was based and the later colonial structure which evolved from it.

In many ways too, the subsequent relationship between indigenous and European officials grew out of the day-to-day adaptions to circumstance of the economy-conscious VOC. Dutchmen decided policies and priorities, while the natives worked with the people to produce the goods. In areas in which the

Company's interests were involved, the freedom of the Regents was circumscribed. But the VOC had a very narrow span of interest: it insisted only that the *Bupati* (Regents) acknowledge its suzerainty, abstain from political or trade relations with foreign powers, keep the peace, and collect and deliver the required produce. The pomp and ceremony of the native chiefs was retained, they continued to live according to their own traditions. In some cases a Regent may have gained in power because of Company backing, for if he had this support he could override both cultural and military checks and balances which existed in the indigenous polity. Moreover, intensification of exploitation gave many *Bupati* extra income, so they lived lavishly off their percentages and perquisites.[4]

Despite its initial profits, the Company's financial position deteriorated badly during the late eighteenth century. By 1798 it was clear that salvage attempts were useless and the VOC was soon abolished, after having been active in the Indies for nearly two centuries. After a few years of vacillation Java, its fate determined by European wars, then passed into the hands of the Bonaparte appointee, Hermen Willem Daendels, whose period of office (1808-1811) ushered in a quarter century of upheaval.

Daendels, like his successor of the British interregnum Thomas Stamford Raffles (1811-1816), was an outsider who broke completely with Company tradition. He did not subscribe to the orthodoxy that any attempt at reform of native government would bring disaster and vast expense upon the head of the unwary; he wanted efficiency, and it seemed to him that the major obstacle was the administrative system inherited from VOC days.

Daendels' aim was to centralize power in Batavia and tighten its administrative and financial control over the native chiefs. He did away with the services of a Governor of the North East Coast and divided the area into five Prefectures: each European Prefect was given wide powers exercised under the Governor-General's supervision. Thirty Regencies were set up; their *Bupati* (Regents) lost any hereditary rights they might have had, while their claims to *ex officio* lands, to labour services and levies of produce, were all reduced. Instead they were to be salaried officials, their pay and position defined by correlation with military rank. Henceforth their pride was to derive from their role as 'the King's Servants' and not from identification with past glories.

Adjustments were also made in the Javanese courts, underlining the subservience of the native rulers. Daendels regarded the *hormat* (customary ways of showing respect) which Residents there were forced to use as a humiliation. High European officials should not have to bow and scrape, stand bareheaded and offer the Sunan (of Surakarta or Solo) and the Sultan (of Yogyakarta) wine and

[4] C. Day, *The Dutch in Java* (New York, 1904; Kuala Lumpur, 1966); H. Sutherland, 'Notes on Java's Regent Families', *Indonesia*, 16 (October 1973) pp. 113-48; 17 (April 1974) pp. 1-42.

sirih (betel) to refresh themselves as if they, the Residents, were courtiers seeking favour rather than agents of a great power. So Daendels renamed the Residents 'Ministers' and decreed that they should bear the golden parasol of high rank and that ceremonial expressions of status be re-adjusted accordingly. There were some revolts, but on the whole the aristocracy submitted. How far they were actually forced to change their relations with the people is uncertain, but certainly most of Daendels' restructuring could not be implemented in the short period of his rule. However, the changed attitude and bearing of the European administration towards the high *priyayi* caused insecurity and resentment among a class used to thinking of its position as pre-ordained.[5]

Raffles' plans continued the main thrust of Daendels' program. He wished to increase direct contact between government and people by introducing a new, lower, rank of European official, the Assistant Residents, and also by having agents of the central government working directly with the population. This broke with the long-established practice of always working through the hierarchy of native chiefs. His ambitious financial reforms included making the people's obligation to government a tax, rather than a duty to support the Regents, but once again time was too short (and probably opposition too strong) for any significant changes in the bond between native chiefs and their subjects. Nevertheless, the position of the *Bupati* reached its nadir under Daendels and Raffles. This demotion, combined with shock over the British attack on the Yogyakarta Palace and reduction of Banten and Cirebon Sultanates to Residencies must have been demoralizing for the elite.

During the British interregnum the administration's territorial framework became more standardized. Java was divided into seventeen areas, most of which were under European Residents and subdivided into Regencies. The pattern followed the general outlines of the earlier VOC organization but bore an even closer resemblance to the final pattern of the twentieth century. This was also true of the officials' hierarchies and their routine.

The Governors and *Gezaghebbers* of Company days became first Prefects and then *Landdrosten* under Daendels, who also equipped each with a secretary, quite a powerful official who could deputize for the Prefect in his absence. Raffles rechristened the Prefects Residents and allowed each an Assistant Resident; in 1819 these Assistant Residents were allocated specific territories usually coinciding with a Regency, so that there were three to five Assistant Residencies in each Residency. The third level of Europeans in regional government, the *Controleurs,* grew out of the Crop Overseers of VOC days. Although they eventually became the chief means of Dutch intervention in the village, they were primarily concerned with agriculture through most of the nineteenth century and were not officially integrated into the civil service until 1872.

[5] P.J. Veth, *Java: Geographisch, Ethnologisch, Historisch* (2nd ed.) (Haarlem, 1898) Vol. II, pp. 260-276; B.J.O. Schricke, 'The native rulers' in his *Indonesian Sociological Studies* (The Hague, 1955) Vol. I, pp. 209-215.

It was the interventionist Daendels and Raffles who brought native officials below the rank of Regent within the framework controlled by the central government. The status of these lesser officials was regularized and hierarchies and titles simplified. Highest was the *Patih*, the Regent's 'Prime Minister' or administrative chief deputy. In many areas the *Patih* virtually ran the Regency: their power depended on the personality and interests of their *Bupati*. This position of *Patih* was long established in Java; the courts had their own (called *Rijksbestuurder*, 'administrator of the realm' by the Dutch) who handled the practicalities of daily government. Raffles allowed each *Bupati* to have a *Patih* who could act for him, in much the same way as the Assistant Resident could stand in for the Resident, but not all Regents took advantage of this possibility. The *Patih* also supervised the lower territorial chiefs; the district heads called *Wedana, Demang* or *Mantri Agung* during Daendels' time, and simplified by Raffles to *Wedana*. Below the *Wedana* were the village headmen, who were not part of the civil service or *priyayi* world. The various native officials also had professional subordinates called *Mantri* who usually performed specific duties such as in irrigation or police work. The religious, legal and tax officials – *Penghulu, Jaksa* and sub-collector – completed the body of native employees in regional administration, although they were somewhat separate from the main axis of territorial officials.

The methods by which later native and European civil services fulfilled their tasks were also present in embryo after the Raffles reforms. During the British period it was required that all Residents make periodic tours of inspection and submit memoranda. Gradually these grew into a repetitive pattern of *tournée* (tours of duty), *vergaderingen* (meetings with subordinate officials), and regular report-writing which formed the basic work of all officials until the end of the colonial period.[6]

In many ways the Javanese administration of 1820 – at least in the form in which it existed on paper in Batavia – was closer to a modern bureaucracy than it was to the VOC pattern of twenty-odd years before. Major and apparently decisive breaks had been made with traditional policy, and it seemed likely that the next decades would see a gradual translation of theory into reality and hence the development of a European-style administration in Java. This did not happen, and during the next fifteen years Batavia turned back to VOC styles in its use of the native chiefs.

At first the Commissioners-General who supervised the re-establishment of Dutch control were, if anything, more radical in their treatment of the Regents than their predecessors. They did what Daendels and Raffles had considered but decided against: they abolished *ex officio* land and made all native chiefs mere

[6] On administrative development, see, *inter alia*, L. Pronk, *De Bestuursreorganisatie-Mullemeister op Java en Madoera en haar beteekenis voor het heden* (Leiden, 1929); A.D.A. de Kat Angelino, *Staatkundig Beleid en Bestuurszorg in Nederlandsch-Indie* 3 vols., ('s-Gravenhage, 1929-30); R.H. Kleyn, *Het Gewestelijk Bestuur op Java* (Leiden, 1889).

salaried officials. But under Governor General G.A. Baron van der Capellen (1818-26) the Company approach reasserted itself, although at first he had toyed with such drastic ideas as eliminating all vestiges of traditional government, abolishing the principalities and *Bupati*. But Van der Capellen and Dutch rule itself were challenged by Diponegoro's revolt, and the uncertain course of the Java War (1825-30) forced the colonial authorities to revalue the usefulness of the *Bupati*.

The attitude of the Commissioners-General towards the Regents was set out in a 'Regulation Governing the Duties, Titles and Ranks of the Regents in the Island of Java' which was ratified in 1820. This remained in force, with many minor changes, until 1926. It specified that the *Bupati* were the 'first people' in their Regency, that they stood under the immediate command of the Residents, not the Assistant Residents, but in matters concerning the native population they were the Assistant Residents' 'trusted advisers' and 'younger brothers'. They were instructed to supervise such matters as agriculture, animal husbandry, security, health, irrigation, the upkeep of roads and tax collection in their Regencies; they were also to keep an eye on 'the Mohammedan religion'. The regulation carefully defined the titles, ceremonies, dress and trappings permissible for the various *Bupati*. There was no mention of Regents' rights, or of hereditary succession; responsibilities were vaguely defined at a high level of generalization, and there was no allocation of power to the Regents. But what was clear was their subordination to, and dependence upon, the European Residents.

By the time this vague Regulation came into force there were two opposed schools of thought on the place of the Regents in the administration. One maintained that they were an unnecessary nuisance, hampering the efficient course of government, while the other stressed their hold over the people, their influence which must work for Netherlands' rule over Java rather than against it. Most local European officials, the BB, belonged to the former school. In 1818 it was said that Residents simply ignored the Regents, and two years later Van der Capellen himself noted that 'the Regents were treated practically everywhere with scorn and excluded from any share in the government, and practically everywhere the European officials regarded the Regents as superfluous cogs in the government machinery'.[7]

Local BB officials, faced with practical problems and interested in quick results, found working through the *Bupati* time-consuming and pointless. They preferred to develop a more effective team of Resident, Assistant Resident and *Controleur* working directly with the *Wedana*, the district heads. The Java War, however, converted the central administration in Batavia to the view that it was essential to keep the Regents' loyalty by protecting them, involving them in government, and treating them with respect. With this in mind, Batavia issued regular circulars exhorting the Residents to be courteous to the Regents, to take

[7] Schrieke, 'The native rulers', pp. 215-9.

them seriously and so maintain their useful prestige. Such admonitions seldom had much effect, and they were repeated throughout the colonial period.

Disagreement between Batavia's Department of Interior Administration (the DIA) and BB officials in the field over Regents was only one aspect of the tension between the increasingly bureaucratized capital, and the territorial administrators. The former tried to control the latter, who usually believed that city men knew little of the realities of rural government. Although most of the highest officials in the DIA, such as the Directors, were ex-BB men, the staff was generally office-trained. To the Resident or *Controleur* on the spot such men often seemed formalistic and unimaginative, or else too influenced by high-flown theories with little basis in hard facts.

As the nineteenth century moved towards its close, Batavia's efforts to force the regional officials into desired behaviour became more intense and correspondingly resented. This was reflected in widespread BB suspicion of the DIA, of the powerful General Secretariat (the senior, and often rather anonymous officials of the Governor-General's staff) and of the politicians and bureaucrats in the Colonial Ministry at The Hague. To many local officials, 'Batavia' was a collection of carping, budget-watching critics, ignorant of the native world outside their offices, but who had unfortunately been vested with the power to fix policy and decide promotions, although they had no sympathy with the BB and its problems.

But by 1830, Batavia had succeeded in redirecting the energies of most BB officials and Regents into the service of a new policy: the so-called 'Cultivation System', in which both European and native officials found demanding work and considerable advantage. This system of VOC-style forced cultivation was intended to relieve the Netherlands' debts. Under government supervision Javanese would use part of their land for designated crops, to be marketed by the Dutch authorities. Co-operation of native chiefs was essential if the rural population was to be mobilized, so for practical and political reasons Governor-General J. van den Bosch (1830-33) returned the Regents to their pre-Daendels state although, if anything, their prestige was more carefully guarded than it had been under arbitrary Company administration.

The introduction of the Cultivation System was opposed by politicians in the Netherlands and also by officials in Java, many of whom did not like the idea of becoming glorified overseers. So various incentives were built into the system to win over officials, the chief inducement being extra income, proportionate to their areas' production. Since extension and intensification of the Cultivation System was directly in the officials' interests, this encouraged them to exceed theoretical limitations on the use of land and labour. Government *priyayi* became agents of an exploitative centre, and the distance between them and the peasantry widened accordingly. Abuse was common, force used when necessary. For example, since negotiations to obtain land were simpler in settlements with communal possession some officials forced villages to abandon individual

landownership. A case occurred in 1833 when the Regent of Gresik Lor ordered all land registers to be collected and burnt, so introducing the more convenient communal possession! Such injustices were far from rare.[8]

Great care was taken to harness the *Bupati* to this ambitious commercial undertaking. Not only were they offered percentages, but they also had their old privileges restored. *Ex officio* land was re-introduced (in many cases they had probably lost it only in theory) and Regents were given a concrete stake in the colonial state by being granted the right to hereditary succession.

This inducement had been used earlier during the Java war, when the Dutch needed the Regents as military allies. Loyal *Bupati* were assured that the *Kabupaten* (Regency) would remain in their family, at least for the classic period of 'seven generations'. But such promises were informal: nothing was written down to establish the general principle of Regents' inheritance of office. Batavia's assurances were individual and easily broken when necessary; they did not really deviate from the established Javanese custom of hereditary succession unless it threatened the interests of the state.

In the mid-nineteenth century, however, colonial government was placed on an entirely new footing. The Netherlands Constitution of 1848 opened the king's conduct of colonial affairs to the scrutiny of the States General. What amounted to a colonial constitution had to be promulgated, and this finally was done with the *Regeerings Reglement* (Government Regulations) of 1854.

The position of the *Pangreh Praja* was defined in articles 67 and 69. The first confirmed that:

> Insofar as circumstances permit, the native population is to be left under the supervision of its own, government-appointed or -recognized chiefs, subject to such higher supervision as shall be fixed by general or particular order of the Governor General.

This attracted heavy criticism in the Netherlands parliament, because of the ambiguity of the phrase *eigen hoofden*, 'own (or natural) chiefs'. But the article stood, and it was tacitly accepted that the natives' natural leaders were the governing aristocracy of their own race; the high *priyayi* were to be maintained as *volkshoofden*, traditional chiefs.

In particular, the Regents were to embody the *volkshoofden* quality. Their prestige and inherited charisma were to guarantee the loyalty of the populace, while mundane administration could, if necessary, be left to capable lesser officials, *Patih* and *Wedana*. This tendency towards specialization within the *Pangreh Praja* was emphasized by article 69 of the 1854 Constitution. This stated that 'Regents were chosen by the Governor-General from among the native

[8] Day; C. Fasseur, *Kultuurstelsel en Koloniale Baten: De Nederlandse Exploitatie van Java, 1840-1860* (Leiden, 1975); Onghokham, 'The Residency of Madiun. Priyayi and Peasant in the Nineteenth Century' (Ph.D. thesis, Yale University, 1975).

population', and that insofar as it was reconcilable with the need for a candidate of 'ability, diligence, honesty and loyalty', a son or close relative of the last *Bupati* would be chosen. So inheritance of office became a Regent's right and a line was drawn between *Bupati* and other native officials. Inevitably, this distinction gave individuals from *Bupati* families special status, and encouraged the emergence of the inter-related Regent clans as a definable upper class, as the so called 'ningrat' *priyayi*.[9]

The lesser officials, from *Patih* to Assistant *Wedana*, were still great figures in local society, and Batavia tried to prevent the BB from diminishing their prestige. But their trappings and *hormat* were, from the European point of view, mere perquisites of office: as individuals or families they had no birthright to special ranks. So the Regents had a unique role, a ceremonial function focused on legitimizing and strengthening Dutch authority by linking it to indigenous political traditions. This was acceptable as long as these traditions were still felt to be valid, as long as the majority continued to accept the *Bupati's* right to hereditary high status. But once changes in Javanese society produced groups which queried the existing racial and social stratification, then the Regents' position came under heavy criticism.

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Already in the mid-nineteenth century the relationship between Batavia and the Netherlands, between local and central administrations, between *Pangreh Praja* and BB, between *priyayi* and people had begun to change. The main stimulus for change was Dutch activity. It was not that the colonial government consciously initiated or directed innovations (on the contrary, it usually strove to isolate the people from the impact of social and economic change), but rather that the colonial administration was the link connecting the Indies to world markets and to political ferment in the Netherlands. No matter how much the government tried to prevent impulses travelling from such uncertain sources into the Indies scene, the connection made interaction inevitable.

Within the closely controlled colonial situation only the Europeans had the freedom to shape government policy and to promote large-scale economic activity, so they were inevitably the major catalysts of social change. The local administrations, Dutch and indigenous, brought Batavia's demands home to the people. As the *priyayi* were integrated more closely into the centrally directed control network they became less dependent on popular support than on Dutch approval. They could afford to be harsh, for while the BB and Batavia supported them they were in a stronger position than the pre-colonial chiefs had ever been. However, gathering liberal criticism of the Cultivation System, coupled with an extension of the political power of the Netherlands middle classes, led to the Agrarian Law

[9] H. Sutherland, 'The Priyayi', *Indonesia*, 19 (April 1975) pp. 70-6. Also S.P. Scherer, 'Harmony and Dissonance: Early Nationalist Thought in Java' (M.A. thesis, Cornell University 1975) p. 27. Many *Bupati* names end in 'ningrat'.

of 1870. This was designed to replace a system 'rooted in unrighteousness' with one 'which preferred freedom and justice above profit seeking' or, as Furnivall remarks, 'with one based on the principle that profits should go to private individuals rather than to the public'.[10] The 1870 law abolished the state monopoly of sugar growing, and allowed private enterprise to take out long leases on so-called 'waste lands' (which were in fact frequently used, though not for crops), and short-term leases on lands under cultivation.

This marked the beginning of the Cultivation System's dismantling, although government production of some crops, notably coffee, continued into the twentieth century. During the late eighteen-hundreds plantations spread across much of Java: sugar, the dominant crop of the period, was grown along the North Coast, in the Principalities and especially in the Brantas delta of East Java. Private enterprise in Priangan produced cinchona, tea, rubber, coffee, coconut products and so on, while the rapidly expanding plantation area of the Extreme East was famous for its tobacco and coffee. The government supervised the leasing of land and the use of labour by the enterprises; in theory it protected the people from abuse by alien entrepreneurs. In practice Batavia and the BB tended rather to serve European interests but, in any event, the marked intensification of economic activity forced the administration to increase its intervention in Indonesian affairs. Government structure in the mid-nineteenth century had revealed its narrow economic focus: the Departments in 1855 were Finance, Means and Domains, Production and Civil Stores, Cultivations, and finally Public Works. The reorganization of 1866 showed some increase in breadth, creating four Departments, those of Interior Administration (DIA), of Education, Religion and Industry, of Public Works and of Finance. A Justice Department was first formed in 1870, and was followed in 1904 by a Department of Agriculture (reorganized in 1911 as Agriculture, Industry and Trade), and there were several other rearrangements in the course of the twentieth century. There also developed, most markedly round the turn of the century, a wide range of specialized and technical agencies handling such matters as medical and veterinary work, the agricultural extension service, popular credit and pawnshops.

New enterprises and new government services required imported personnel, and as the racial composition of society changed, so too did the demands upon the administration. The growing European community insisted on home comforts, better schools, housing and health services; their demands reflected changing attitudes and expectations. They became less *Indische*, less part of the Indies *mestizo* culture, and more colonial Dutch.[11] The Indies were no longer a remote, exotic and possibly dangerous place in which a man might find a fortune or a miserable end. In Java at least improving communications within the country

[10] J.S. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice: a Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India* (Cambridge, 1957) p. 223.

[11] W.F. Wertheim, *Indonesian Society in Transition: a Study of Social Change* (The Hague, 1964) pp. 40ff., 91ff., 173ff.

and with the Netherlands, the changing nature and size of the European community, and the development of Western commercial and social life in the towns, all meant that the BB could remain more Dutch than had once been possible. This affected the life-style of the officials, and hence their relationships with the native officials and the local people. It also had particular repercussions for the Eurasian or Indo-European community.

Many BB officials were Indo-Europeans. Although there was a general preference for pure Netherlanders, as representatives of 'European civilization', there was in theory no racial discrimination and many 'Indos' reached high rank. Nevertheless, there was a tendency for Eurasians to cluster in the clerical and middle ranks of the technical services. The *kleinambtenaars* ('petty officials') examination had been instituted in 1864 to check Eurasians' suitability for entry to government lower echelons by offering an elementary test of arithmetical ability and literacy in Dutch. But Indonesians began to take the examination, and by the turn of the century many Indos felt squeezed between the growing pure European community and the increasingly mobile – and lower paid – natives. Westernization of both society and bureaucracy undermined *mestizo* mores.

Both European and native corps had to be equipped for the emerging style of government. The training of the BB was thoroughly reorganized and during the nineteenth century there was an increasing emphasis on skill and schooling. After several apprenticeship and attachment schemes an institute had been opened in Surakarta in 1832 to train young men destined for the BB, to give them some knowledge of Javanese and local history and customs. Ten years later a more formal education was available with the opening of a two-year course in East Indies subjects, known as Indology, at the new engineering college at Delft. First-class officials added this specialized knowledge to a university law degree, while second-class officials just did the college's usual course. Higher positions in the BB were reserved for Delft graduates, of whom there were over three hundred by 1864.

It was felt that this arrangement was unsatisfactory in terms of quality and quantity, and it was only with the establishment of the so-called *grootambtenaars* (literally 'great officials') examination in 1863 that some stability was achieved. This became the recognized qualification for BB officials, and the Indies Institutions at Delft (till 1900) and Leiden (1864-1876, 1902 till World War II) prepared candidates. After 1867 it became possible to prepare for the G.A. (*grootambtenaars*) diploma in Batavia, where the Gymnasium Willem III (established in 1860) had a Division B offering a course in the history, geography, ethnology, religion, law, political and popular institutions of the Indies. This school, the only one of its kind in the Indies, continued to prepare candidates for the examination until 1913. In the Netherlands the 'liberalness' of the so-called 'Leiden school' so antagonized big business that in 1925 it helped establish an Indological Department at Utrecht, nicknamed the 'oil faculty'.

The burgeoning educational emphasis in BB training was a product of new needs and attitudes, which also affected the status and recruitment of the corps. Coolhaas remarks that whereas in the first half of the nineteenth century officials were either aristocrats or adventurers, by the second half they tended to come from the conservative upper bourgeoisie. During the twentieth century a further change took place, as many were drawn from the petty bourgeoisie and even a few workers' sons entered the BB.[12]

Inevitably, the *Pangreh Praja* was also caught up in the changing situation. New instructions defined the duties of particular ranks, for Regents and *Wedana* in 1867, *Wedana* again in 1886 and for Assistant *Wedana* in 1874. More important was the loss of traditional rights over land and labour. In 1867 their *ex officio* lands were finally withdrawn, while in 1872 the right to demand personal labour services was curtailed and finally removed in 1882. The general tightening up of the administrative network reduced officials' freedom to extract 'voluntary' contributions from the people, and further altered the relationship between *priyayi* and peasant. The Javanese warrior-chiefs, living off the tribute of their people, were becoming salaried Malay-writing clerks, agricultural overseers and colonial policemen.

Despite these changes, and the incipient trend towards bureaucratization, it was an article of Dutch faith that the native officials would retain their prestige with the people. This prestige was a key element in colonial control, and was expected somehow to survive, even though Batavia's policies often forced government *priyayi* to demand far more of the people than custom allowed. This was true of vaccination drives against small-pox, the slaughtering of beasts to control animal diseases, the introduction of new taxes and the intensification of *corvée* duties. The *Pangreh Praja* were the local agents of the interventionist government, and this identification with the Dutch regime became a growing liability.

Western-style education for native officials was important both as a preparation for new bureaucratic styles, and also in moving them closer to Batavia and to European attitudes. In 1848 the government allocated funds for the education of Javanese officials, but this had little result. Although the 1854 constitution stressed Dutch responsibility for education, it was not until 1872 that a school in Batavia was planned for 'the sons of chiefs and other prosperous natives'. Even so, it was six years before the *hoofdenscholen* (chiefs' schools) were established in Java, one each at Bandung, Magelang and Probolinggo. Before this, schools for teachers and *Dokter Jawa* (native medical personnel) provided the only government education for natives above the most rudimentary level, and they had only been opened in 1851.

12 Ph. Coolhaas, 'Ontstaan, groei en bloei van het corps' in *Gedenkboek van de Vereniging van Ambtenaren bij het Binnenlands Bestuur in Indonesie* (Utrecht, 1956) p. 60. Also *De Vorming van den Bestuursambtenaar voor Overzeesche Gewesten in Nederland, Engeland, Frankrijk, Belgie en Italie* (Leiden, [c. 1937]) (hereafter *De Vorming...*) pp. 22-81.

The *hoofdenscholen* did not give a specialized administrative training, but taught practical subjects much like the teachers' schools. In 1893, however, a more focused curriculum was introduced in the Magelang school. Study was lengthened by two years to five and subjects, such as law, added which were felt to be particularly useful to future *Bupati* – since most pupils were Regents' sons, it was assumed that they would succeed their fathers. With the reorganization of the Magelang *hoofdenschool* Dutch was abolished as the medium of instruction, for it was felt to be an unnecessary burden on the pupils. But it was soon realized that this was a mistake since the government was anxious to spread knowledge of Dutch, and in 1899 it was re-introduced. In 1900 the Bandung and Probolinggo schools were reorganized along the same lines and all three were renamed *Opleidingscholen voor Inlandsche Ambtenaren* (Training Schools for Native Officials), usually known as *OSVIA*.[13]

In 1874 the structure of the *Pangreh Praja* was reorganized and tightened up as part of the colonial reform plans of the liberal Minister of Colonies, I.D. Fransen van de Putte (1863-6, 1872-4). He intensified control at the popular level by dividing Districts into Sub-Districts of about fifteen villages under the supervision of an Assistant *Wedana*, and also tried to guarantee greater efficiency at Regency level by placing *Patih* beside all Regents. The hierarchy of officials and the size of units were standardized. The resulting intra-Regency structure remained the same until the end of the colonial period, although higher levels were later rearranged.

Since the 1860s assorted Ministers and Governors-General had discussed the possibility of creating large new territorial units in Java as a basis for decentralization. In 1892 a full investigation into Java's administration was begun, and it was hoped that the ensuing Mullemeister report would provide the basis for far-reaching reforms. But, as was so often the case, the need for economy undermined the whole project, so the resulting proposals amounted to nothing more than a further simplification of the bureaucratic hierarchy, abolition of a few minor posts and the unification of very small units. The money so saved was to go into higher salaries, especially for the BB. It was a timid report, and criticized as such, but the Colonial Minister, J.Th. Cremer (1897-1901), thought that few officials with better pay would give greater efficiency, so the reforms – such as they were – went through.[14] They were penny-pinching and ultimately insignificant, but as a pruned-down remnant of an intended grand design they typified the fate which awaited most such plans in Indies administration.

[13] De Kat Angelino, *Staatkundig Beleid...* Vol. III, pp. 82-3; R. Kadarman, 'De geschiedenis van de opleiding van het Inheemsch Bestuur' in *Gedenkboek 1928-1938. Vereeniging van Ambtenaren bij den Inlandschen Bestuursdienst* (Batavia, 1938) (hereafter *Gedenkboek Vaib*) pp. 48-59; J.H.A. Logemann, 'De opleiding van het Inlandsch Bestuur' in *De Vorming...* pp. 81-6.

[14] Pronk, *passim.*

Such formal changes are relatively easy to locate and summarize; they were documented in parliamentary debates and enshrined in the Government Gazette. The social and political realities which lay behind them are more elusive. Practice did not always follow theory. Certain trends can be isolated – increasing intervention by government, consolidation of the BB's position – but their effects on the native officials are more difficult to evaluate. Not all *priyayi* activities were equally affected by the Europeans. Many aspects of their lives, of little interest to the Dutch, remained their own. But there was no impermeable division between public and private spheres, and the relationship between the colonial regime and the *Pangreh Praja* was shaped by the social and political, as well as the professional, interaction of government *priyayi* and BB.

The following chapter describes this wider relationship between European and native officials, colonial and indigenous elites, towards the end of the eighteen-hundreds.

CHAPTER 2
GOVERNMENT *PRIYAYI*: LIFE-STYLE AND SOCIAL SETTING

There was not one single native administrative corps in Java, but some twenty separate services, as each Residency had its own hierarchy of government *priyayi*. There was considerable variation, not only between Residencies but often within the one Residency under different regimes. Assistant Residents and Residents usually had pet theories about handling native officials or the Javanese in general, as well as idiosyncratic enthusiasms for different aspects of government and development. But despite such mutations, there were strong threads of continuity in the *kabupaten*. For although BB officials might come and go, most Regents were there to stay for at least a decade. The *Bupati* and the *Lurah* (village head) were the fixed axes around which much parochial business revolved since, unlike the others, they were specifically identified with their own particular territory; they and their families were usually fixtures in the local scene. Other native officials and the BB normally served two to five years in each posting.

The *Bupati* were based in the Regency capitals, which could be cities like Semarang or Bandung, but were far more likely to be small ports or inland market towns. Regents and *priyayi* are sometimes described as representative of urban culture, and they did form part of the supra-village social and cultural stratum of Java. But not all *priyayi* were cosmopolitan, equally at home in the worldly maritime cities or highly refined *kraton;* most were more like rural gentry than court aristocracy. They may well have looked to the large centres for their models, but they were also rooted in local society, acting as brokers between village and city. Many of their inland capitals, especially before the growth of the modern road and rail network, were far from metropolitan. They were small clusters of shops, a market serving the district, rather than a distinctly urban centre.

In the centre of their towns there was always a grassy square, the *alun-alun*, ringed by the most important buildings such as mosque, market, and the compounds of Dutch officials and Regent. (Regents were provided with their houses by the government, and they served as both homes and offices.) The Regent's residence, like the Regency itself, was called *kabupaten*, or more specifically *dalem*. Virtually all were imposing buildings, especially those dating from the early nineteenth century, and the great majority were constructed according to pattern.

Most *kabupaten* were set in extensive gardens with a semi-circular drive linking them to the road running along the *alun-alun*. A pavilion-like open structure of floor, pillars and roof faced the square. This was the *pendopo* in which the Regent conducted his business, met the people and staged the ceremonies and entertainments which were a major part of his work. The four pillars in the centre of the *pendopo* were known as the *soko guru* and were of

considerable symbolic significance. Metaphorically they represented the administration supporting the realm, while according to tradition, discussion on matters of state was held under them. These pillars were also important in beliefs concerning the spiritual aspects of government. In the old days it was customary when building a *kabupaten* to bury an offering under the *soko guru* as a *tumbal* ('antidote') to protect the Regent family and maintain harmony. At one time this was a human being, or so it is said, but by the late nineteenth century it was usually the head of a buffalo or occasionally some other animal. In Tuban, for example, it was a horse, and it was believed that Regents of Tuban who did not come from the family in power at the time the *kabupaten* was built could hear the ghost horse galloping at night.

Many *kabupaten* were regarded as having other spirits attached to them which watched over the inhabitants. Tulungagung was guarded by the spirit of an old servant who plagued any Regent who was an outsider, while in Brebes the giant snake, Kiyai Poleng, would appear to alien *Bupati*. Sometimes too, spirits not specifically linked to the *kabupaten* might intervene to protect it. So it was said that during the communist disturbances of 1926 a band of men marched on the Ciamis *kabupaten* only to turn back when they saw it was protected by the spirit Onom and his followers. The *kabupaten*, and particularly the essential *soko guru* were often seen as *pusaka*, part of the spiritually potent regalia of government, charged with the accumulated power of earlier rulers and spirits. So in some cases when it was necessary to destroy a *kabupaten* to build a new one, or even to move the seat of the Regency to a new town, then the *soko guru* would be carefully incorporated into the new *pendopo*.

The *kabupaten* buildings behind the *pendopo* were less important; in many late-nineteenth or twentieth century *kabupaten* they were rather bourgeois Western houses. But usually there was a large main edifice flanked by side buildings, while behind there was a rear *pendopo* and a conglomerate of servants' dwellings, kitchens, stables and so on. For the *kabupaten* had to be large in order to accommodate the Regent, his wives and children, a small army of miscellaneous relatives, dependents and clients and a formidable staff of servants.

Almost all nineteenth century Regents were polygamous, having a chief wife, the *Raden Ayu* or *padmi*, who was of equivalent rank and hence usually the daughter of another *Bupati*; she may or may not have been the first wife chronologically. Then there were the secondary wives, *selir* or *ampeyan*. According to Islam a man was allowed to have up to four wives at any one time, and since divorce was easy it was quite possible for a Regent to have had many more than four wives in his lifetime. The children of secondary wives had lower status than the *padmi's* children, but this varied from place to place – in the north of central Java the disadvantage was minimal.

Intermarriage with other Regent families was usual, particularly within the one Residency, so there was an extensive network of relationships centred on *Bupati*. The usual tendency was for the children by the *padmi* to marry into

Regent families, while children by *selir* would often marry more junior *priyayi* within the Residency. Regents would take *selir* from most social ranks and a secondary wife from, for example, the family of a *Lurah* could well prove a useful connection with the village community. Many *selir* (especially in coastal areas) came from the periphery of Javanese society or from other communities; some Regents had *selir* of Chinese, Arab or Indo-European descent.

Concubinage and extra-marital sexual alliances were very common among *priyayi* and much of the BB, and such ties could form important links between the officials and the population. In many parts of Java it was quite common for a native or European official to be offered the temporary enjoyment of a girl (often from the *Lurah's* family) when he stayed overnight in a village while on *tournée*. His acceptance complimented the girl, her parents, and the community and probably strengthened the official's local position; it is said that this custom lasted in some areas at least until the Japanese occupation. If a son should result from the union he might be helped in his career by the responsible official, and should he ever reach high rank his genealogy would be suitably elevated. Over the generations *priyayi* marriage patterns in some areas (for example Banten, Madiun, Madura) produced tight-knit 'family circles' which monopolized *Pangreh Praja* positions. Occasionally the Dutch succeeded in breaking open these circles, but sometimes their efforts encountered such opposition that local administration was paralysed, forcing the BB to capitulate and accept the situation.

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Each *kabupaten* was a home for many relatives of the Regent besides his immediate family. It was his duty to provide food and shelter for needy kin and in some cases this meant literally dozens of boarders, who were a great financial burden on the *Bupati*. There were also usually a number of children, adolescents, young men and women who lived at the *kabupaten* to learn the ways of a great establishment. These could be children of neighboring Regents who had come to share any particular educational opportunities which might be available in the *kabupaten*; for example, towards the end of the nineteenth century some Regents employed European tutors. Then too there were daughters of *priyayi* who helped the *Raden Ayu* with the running of the household. They acted partly as servants and partly as family members, serving guests and doing light cleaning while studying the manners of the *Bupati* circle in preparation for their own hopefully advantageous marriage. And finally there were boys and young men who played a similar role vis-a-vis the Regent, offering their services in exchange for training for a *priyayi* career; these last will be discussed in more detail below.

Within the setting of the *kabupaten* the Regents lived on a grand scale which, although it did not match the magnificance of the Company *Bupati*, was still capable of impressing both European and Javanese observers, as indeed was

intended. The first occasion the Regent had on which to display his wealth, taste and generosity was that of his investiture. He was expected to provide food, drink and entertainment first for local Europeans, Chinese and *priyayi* at one reception, and then for the common people as well. An insecure *Bupati*, such as an outsider or man of low birth, could usually be expected to provide an exceptional show, in order to impress and win as much support as possible. Those few Regents who survived their early career without accumulating debts often fell once and for all into the hands of the moneylenders after meeting the investiture bills.

But the investiture did not mark the end of the *Bupati's* obligatory entertaining. He was also expected to stage major celebrations on important family occasions, such as weddings and circumcisions, or at significant points in his own career: the granting of a new title or honour, the reaching of an impressive number of years' service. He was also obliged to give European-style receptions to mark such events as the Queen's birthday, the arrival or departure of a Resident or of an elevated guest. He also had a commitment to his family and to the people of the Regency. In times of need it was expected that the Regent would help. He had to support indigent relatives, educate their children, feed strangers, give aid to the afflicted and contribute to charity.

These demands were a constant financial drain on the *Bupati*: some said wryly it was better to be bled dry quickly, as signs of wealth merely encouraged the supplicants, but in the nineteenth century most were still willing to meet their traditional duties in so far as they were able. Once, with cultivation percentages, the freedom to extract what was needed from the people, and extensive land holdings, the Regents had been easily able to maintain their extravagant life-style. But with the introduction of fixed salaries many of these perquisites were stopped. And despite the high salary (about a thousand guilders per month in 1900 – equal to an Assistant *Wedana's* annual income) the *Bupati's* pay seldom could stretch quite far enough. One exception was in the coffee-growing Priangan, where Regents continued to collect extra income and were wealthier than most others. So *Bupati* were frequently reduced to reliance on moneylenders, usually Chinese, and often to various forms of petty extortion and what the Dutch termed 'corruption'.

Sometimes the financial abuses of the *Bupati* were merely annoying; occasionally they could reduce the entire *Pangreh Praja* of a Regency to poverty and despair. In one case, for example, in Purwokerto at the turn of the century, the Regent embezzled the mosque funds, was deeply in debt to Arab and Chinese moneylenders, extorted 'gifts' and 'loans' from lower *priyayi*, forced them to exchange their good horses for his broken-down ones and to buy (at very inflated prices) his old ornaments, horses, or furniture; he would sometimes then ask for the objects back. His *Raden Ayu* ran a card circle, which *priyayi* wives had to attend (their husbands meanwhile visiting the *Bupati*). In the course of the games a set percentage was kept aside for the hostess, who also

sold clothes to the *priyayi* and their wives. The Regent's *selir* limited her demands to the village heads, sending envoys with written requests for cash, while his mother sold *kain* (batik cloth) to the *Lurah*, keeping a list of those who patronized her. In addition to this the local *priyayi* and people gave many *sumbangan* (contributions) to the Regent, in an effort to win his favour, sending gifts of money, food, cattle, wood, etc.

On the days when the *priyayi* visited the Regent (his name day which occurred every thirty-five days) they were present at an entertainment of *ronggeng* (dancing girls) and *gamelan* players, for the upkeep of which they were 'taxed' up to two and a half guilders a month. It was also obligatory to hire these particular performers for *all* celebrations, even though they were twice as expensive as local girls as they came from Solo. During the dry monsoon the *Bupati* dammed three rivers so that there would be adequate water for his fishing, the big dams being built by hundreds of villagers in unpaid labor; as the final straw the Regent poisoned the fish which was illegal. When taxed with this impressive record of misdemeanors by the BB he denied everything and successfully intimidated the village heads and *priyayi* so no one would testify against him. If the charges against him were true (and he was eventually given a 'dishonourable' discharge – a very rare event as most corruption cases were whitewashed with an 'honourable' discharge) then he seems to have had quite a complete range of techniques under his control.[1]

This was an extreme case and most such situations were more ambiguous. Javanese chiefs were by tradition entitled to *sumbangan* for festivities, and these were given willingly. People would also send Regents unsolicited gifts hoping either that some particular request would be granted, or merely that they themselves would be regarded favourably, without any specific *quid pro quo* in mind. Such customs only gradually came to be seen as 'corrupt', and different groups at different times used the label in various ways. During the nineteenth century it was only when abuse was absolutely unbridled that the BB (who were receiving their share of *sumbangan*) would intervene. There were cases when the government acted strongly, particularly if officials were defrauding Batavia rather than the people. Several Regents who had a rather filibustering attitude to office and were running opium smuggling rings were dismissed during the 1880s and 1890s, but minor evasions and abuses in government finance were endemic in many areas. Plantation development opened a new dimension to the corruption issue, as many companies sought to make the *priyayi* serve their economic interests by a judicious combination of gifts and pressure, often with the approval of the similarly treated BB. Jember was the centre of a number of

[1] Onghokham, pp. 123, 140-7 on the nineteenth century Regents' economic position. The Purwokerto case is described in the Colonial Archives *Verbaal* file (hereafter Vb.) 21 September 1905, no. 29.

tobacco scandals in the 1890s, and the strong grip of sugar on local administration in several areas was notorious throughout Java.[2] In such regions the VOC was not as much in the past as might have at first appeared.

The personal hobbies and diversions of the Regents could be very expensive, so adding to their need for cash, although some of the most lavish were dying out. Tiger fights, for example, were becoming rare. Military tournaments, in which *priyayi* using horse and weapons briefly recaptured the spirit of their martial past, were also seldom staged as they no longer suited the image of the *Pangreh Praja* and the Dutch disapproved of them. There were diversions on a more modest scale, depending on individual taste. Hunting was very popular in suitable areas, and the great deer hunts of the Priangan Regents involved the services of hundreds of villagers as beaters, bearers and servants. Gambling was very common among the *priyayi* and their wives, although its results were so disastrous in some cases that there was government pressure against it. Drinking, opium smoking and womanizing also had their adherents: one Regent was noted for the assiduity of his *tournée* trips through the villages, but gained little credit thereby as the Resident ascribed it to his fondness of women rather than duty. Many *Bupati* followed more elevated pursuits, devoting their time to literature, *wayang*, music, dance and philosophical, mystical and religious activities; their patronage was important in maintaining the development of cultural activities in areas far from the major *kraton*.

The Regent's companions in his activities would usually be drawn from the local *priyayi* and might perhaps include the occasional *Controleur* or Assistant Resident. The relationship between the *Bupati* and the other native officials was never that of equals, however, for differences in rank were too great to be forgotten even by the most intimate friends. The influence of the strictly heirarchical Javanese tradition was graphically dramatized once a year on the occasion of *Garebeg Puasa* or *Lebaran*, the celebration at the end of the Muslim fasting month, *Ramadan*.

Early that morning the Regent dressed in his full splendor and accompanied by a retinue bearing his attributes of rank, including the coloured *payung* (parasol of office), would go in procession to the mosque to pray. Then he would return to seat himself on the floor of the *pendopo* (where a *gamelan*, Javanese orchestra, would be playing) and receive his subordinate *priyayi*. They would come asking his forgiveness in accordance with established custom, for on that day all children ask forgiveness of their parents, subordinates of their superiors, young people of old and so on throughout society.

The native officials would arrive in descending order of rank, beginning with the *Patih* and ending with the lowest and newest *Mantri*. They would enter wearing the prescribed dress, using the low crouching walk (*jalan jongkok*) of the courts, sit in front of the Regent, make the *sembah* (gesture of obeisance

[2] Onghokham; H. Sutherland, 'Pangreh Pradja. Java's Indigenous Administrative Corps and its Role in the Last Decades of Dutch Colonial Rule' (Ph.D. thesis, Yale, 1973) p. 106.

with hands together in front of the nose) and perform the *sungkem* or knee kiss. All this would be performed in the restrained, ritualized fashion of the court etiquette on which the ceremony was modelled. Later in the day the *Patih* would receive the lower *priyayi* in the same fashion, the local *Wedana* and Assistant *Wedana* would receive their subordinates and villagers and so on down the hierarchy.

Bound together though they were by a shared culture and occupation, the *priyayi* differentiated among themselves on the grounds of birth, family connections, rank, ability, relations with Europeans and mastery of highly respected cultural skills. As a rule, the higher positions in the native civil service (even the non-hereditary ones) went to people of high birth, since their prestige was felt to make them more effective officials. But it was possible for men of common birth to rise at least to the middle ranks, or to be appointed to such high status jobs as that of *Wedana* on the grounds of ability and connections with the Dutch, and some filtered through to the top. The *priyayi* did not constitute a closed elite by any means, and if a man achieved a high position and adapted himself to the *priyayi* values and life-style then he and his children were accepted – even though the old families would always remember his origins, he was to all intents and purposes a *priyayi*.

The late nineteenth century *Pangreh Praja* hierarchy, as was noted earlier, consisted of the basic Regent-*Patih*-*Wedana*-Assistant *Wedana* axis; various peripheral ranks were mostly abolished in the latter part of the century. There remained a more varied range of *Mantri* in the nineteenth century than in the last decades of colonial rule: there were, for example *Mantri* in charge of salt, opium, irrigation, land registration, coffee, smallpox, sugar cane and wood. All these *Mantri* were regarded as full native officials, part of the general administration, and so eligible for appointment as Assistant *Wedana*. There was no clearcut division between the civil service corps and other government agencies. Most of these *Mantri* functions either disappeared with the gradual contraction of the government's economic role or else were developed further and taken over by specific Departments, so that the range of *Mantri* positions in the *Pangreh Praja* became much more limited as administrative specialization advanced. Some remained, notably the *Mantri Polisi* (police *Mantri*) and the *Mantri Kabupaten* (*Mantri* supervising the domestic administration of the Regent's house).

In so far as their incomes permitted *priyayi* officials lived in much the same style as did the Regents, although they were spared the more extreme social expectations attached to the *kabupaten*. It must be remembered that while an Assistant *Wedana* was a very lowly official indeed as far as Europeans or *Bupati* were concerned, he was a powerful and probably revered man to the population of his sub-district. To them he was *ndoro sten* ('lord' assistant) and they would dismount and walk when they passed his house and squat by the roadside and *sembah* should he pass them by.

The social status of the middle *priyayi* was demonstrated by the scale of their celebrations and their right to call upon the people for services. For example, ten days before the wedding of a Blora *Wedana's* daughter in 1897 local *priyayi* and dozens of villagers gathered (unasked) at the house, the peasants bringing with them *bambu* and *nipa* (palm) leaves to build pavilions and erect triumphal arches which were lit with coloured-glass oil lamps. A week before the wedding the *gamelan* began to play and distant guests began to arrive. Two days before, the entertainment began: *wayang kulit* (shadow play with flat leather puppets), *wayang golek* (with rounded wooden puppets), mask dances, *tayuban* (a drinking and dancing party consisting of men plus a hired dancing girl, often a prostitute) and so on. Hundreds of guests and helpers were fed and housed, the labor and much of the food being contributed by local people and minor officials. The cooks for the main feast included those lesser *priyayi* wives known for their skill. Temporary kitchens were erected, while in the yard food sellers catered for the thousands of spectators from the villages who came to enjoy the entertainment which lasted for five days. Such extravaganzas died out, and by the 1920s celebrations were simpler, lasting three days or less.[3]

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The involvement of the *Pangreh Praja* with village society revolved around the central requirement that the prized *rust en orde* (peace and order) be maintained. Under Mataram terror and torture had been essential instruments of control; under the Dutch, in theory, there was the rule of law. In practice many *priyayi* had recourse to intimidation and bribery, and generally the European officials turned a blind eye: they did not really want to know and unless things got out of hand, results were all that mattered.

The government *priyayi* had to keep a close watch over their area, finding out if there was likely to be trouble and, if it had already occurred, getting a full and unambiguous solution (*keterangan*) to the affair. Frequently a native official's career was made or broken by his degree of success in producing *keterangan* at the administrative meetings, and so a considerable amount of time and money went on investigations and the maintenance of a network of paid spies and informants. The *priyayi* also worked closely with village leaders, not only the administrative heads but also the tough and charismatic *jago* (literally, fighting cock), who were experts in martial arts and related magic and both feared and respected in their communities. Since the emphasis was more on having a satisfactory score of cut-and-dried convictions than on the actual security situation there was every encouragement for the *priyayi* to falsify police proceedings. In many areas *priyayi* and criminals worked out a *modus vivendi* which kept most trouble beyond the borders of the district, and in some

[3] Interviews with Dr Soetardjo Kartohadikoesoemo, Jakarta, 1970; other interviews in Java, 1969-70.

regions there were professional 'framers' (usually criminals) who would plant evidence, give false witness and produce 'thieves' or 'murderers' as necessary.[4] The surprising thing is not so much that abuse occurred, as that, given the quality of intra-administrative relationships, it was not more common.

The context in which *priyayi* lived and worked inevitably shaped their behaviour. They had to adjust to economic and social conditions as well as to their European superiors. Within local society it is possible to distinguish several major distinct, though inter-acting, clusters of people, each demanding a certain sort of response from the *priyayi*.

Most regions had their own local nobilities. In Central Java the palaces of Surakarta, Yogyakarta and the smaller Mangkunegaran and Pakuạlaman were important foci for *priyayi*. Although the courts' jurisdiction did not extend beyond the Principalities' borders, their royal families, aristocracy and officials were linked by family relationships and cultural ties to regional elites, and acted as an important source of opinion and values. Sometimes, too, the Dutch feared the courts were centres of disaffection. The remnants of the Banten and Cirebon Sultanates played a similar role in their areas, while in Priangan the close-knit Regent families were the dominant class.

In fact there were local aristocracies throughout Java, at all levels of society. In Ponorogo, Banyumas and Caringin (Banten), for example, recognized hereditary elites existed at village level, while the Kadilangu of Demak, or the Tjakaraningrat *Bupati* of Bangkalan were acknowledged over a wide region as families with uniquely high status.[5] Such classes and families were usually closely related to local native officials, especially to those of high rank. But the *priyayi* were not a purely birth-based caste, their status was also determined by administrative position. If they were outsiders, or not well-born, their relationship with the aristocracy could be difficult, particularly if they were felt to have supplanted the traditional governing class.

The Islamic leadership was another elite group which demanded continual attention from native officials. Self-conscious Muslims, known as *santri*, formed the major non-*priyayi* element in the Javanese supra-village sphere. They were the strongest indigenous component in trade and business, and this, with their involvement in the Muslim world, gave them a wider awareness than most peasants.

Santri were an important source of opinion and leadership within the native community, particularly in the more Islam-influenced areas of Pasisir, Banten and Madurese East Java. Devout traders and teachers formed a network over a wide area, enabling them to gather facts and rumours and formulate views concerning Java, the Indies, and the Far and Middle East. Itinerant pedlars,

[4] Onghokham, pp. 63-9 on *jago*. See the M.V.O. (*Memorie van Overgave*, the transfer memorandum from an outgoing to an incoming official) in the Colonial Archives, Vb. 5 March 1908, no. 36.

[5] Sutherland, 'Notes on Java's Regent Families'.

travelling businessmen, market dealers, pilgrims and students linked the local *santri* to the wider world so that they not only had access to gossip and market hearsay but also to news of political events, religious controversies and international developments. The trading *santri* and rural teachers and students moved from place to place and had both the information and the interpretative framework to shape popular attitudes.

Priyayi and *santri* were likely to react rather differently to the same events: the *santri* functioned in an Islamic, inter-insular and international context, preoccupied with commerce and organized religion. They were often anti-colonial and anti-Western while, in Middle East oriented circles, they were often critical of local spiritualism and the more syncretist Muslims. Most *priyayi*, on the other hand, were deeply rooted in the Javanese ethic, while their social base was the colonial administration. They were criticized by the more severe *santri* as nominal Muslims who betrayed their faith by serving a *kafir* (non-believing) regime. Naturally, many *priyayi* were pro-government, or at least in favour of the *status quo*, and there was a strong streak of anti-*santri* feeling within the *Pangreh Praja*. Many native officials were ignorant of Islam and remote from the religious leadership. This situation was encouraged rather than deplored by most Dutchmen, who feared 'Mohammedan fanaticism', particularly in the rural Islamic teachers, the *kiyayi*.

Apart from pious traders and teachers there was another Islamic leadership group which, in contrast to the others, was closely linked to the colonial regime. The government maintained its own salaried officials as spokesmen for the Muslim community; these were the *Penghulu* and their assistants, the *Naib*, who were attached to religious and legal institutions to advise on law and custom. These men were often related to *priyayi*, and were regarded by independent critics as tainted by the ungodly. The most intensely religious *santri* did not regard these official Muslims as their representatives, and looked instead to the local teachers.

The gap between *santri* and *priyayi* widened in the latter part of the nineteenth century as Dutch control of the latter intensified and the former came under increasingly strong influence from the Middle East. Secularization of the *priyayi* was paralleled by intensified Muslim self-awareness within *santri* circles, and distrust, fear, and even hatred characterized the relationship between the two groups. Local *kiyayi* and wandering teachers were typical leaders of anti-Dutch movements, and when the banner of revolt was raised against the infidel the first victims were usually native officials. Nevertheless, the cleavage between *Pangreh Praja* and *santri* was not absolute. Where Islamic influence was most strong, as in Banten, government officials had no option but to work with informal religious leaders, as well as the Dutch-appointed spokesmen, for

otherwise they could not function. Also, a small minority of government *priyayi* were orthodox themselves, but in general ties between the administrative elite and devout Muslims were those of armed neutrality.[6]

In any difference of opinion, however, *priyayi* monopolized contact with the colonial authorities, as very few European officials had contact with *santri*. As far as the Dutch were concerned, natives were represented by the *Pangreh Praja* and, in narrowly defined religious matters, by the government-appointed Islamic staff. They denied the *kiyayi* a right to speak, and so even if the local religious leaders had wanted to communicate with the alien regime they were excluded from any official dialogue between rulers and ruled. Inevitably, this increased the estrangement of Batavia and its native servants from Muslim circles.

Indigenous regional economic leadership was largely *santri* but the trading ethnic minorities of Chinese and Arabs played a major part in regional business life. The relationship between the native officials and these groups is ambiguous, little documented and hard to disentangle. Most *priyayi* were in debt, usually to Chinese, and there was undoubtedly a considerable degree of accommodation between the vulnerable pariah businessmen and the often impoverished *Pangreh Praja*. Life was easier for the Arabs, religious brothers of the natives, but they tended to associate with *santri*, although some *priyayi* families proudly numbered the Prophet among their ancestors. Those families with some Chinese ancestry, mainly in coastal regions or the Extreme East, were often less anxious to display the fact.[7]

Variations in local economic circumstances directly affected the *Pangreh Praja's* work because of their impact on local society. Their work was more onerous in plantation regions, where pressures to accommodate to the desires of owners bedevilled the officials, and where outside labourers sometimes proved unamenable to traditional controls. The native officials also had to protect the crops against the people: the burning of cane-fields was a favourite revenge of disgruntled peasants. Where there were extensive privately owned lands (*particuliere landerijen*), the security situation was also difficult. Private lands were usually neglected, with poor communications and no effective policing, a source of trouble-makers and refuge for criminals.

But although local circumstances determined the context in which they worked, the two dominant poles in the *priyayi* world remained people and government, as the native corps' *raison d'etre* was the linking of the two. It was within this framework that the native officials manoeuvred between Islamic

[6] C. Snouck Hurgronje, 'Brieven van een wedono pensioen' in his *Verspreide Geschriften* (Bonn/Leipzig, 1924-6) Vol. IV, pp. 167-70, 195-8; S. Kartodirdjo, *The Peasants' Revolt of Banten in 1889* ... ('s-Gravenhage, 1966); C. Geertz, *The Religion of Java*; H.J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun* (The Hague, 1958).

[7] L. Palmier, *Social Status and Power in Java* (London, 1969) pp. 144-7, on *priyayi*-Chinese relations in the 1950s. L.W.C. van den Berg, *Le Hadhramout et les Colonies Arabes dans l'Archipel Indien* (Batavia, 1886).

leaders, village aristocracies, Dutch plantations and Chinese merchants. The balancing out of various social forces in the interest of stability was an important part of *Pangreh Praja* work.

In many areas, for example, there were extreme *jago* traditions, where charismatic and spiritually powerful fighting men were given special status in society though they defied both colonial law and the usual Javanese norms. Such types as the *jawara* of Banten or the *warok* of Ponorogo, with their emphasis on courage and a defiant *machismo*, were not only feared but respected by many local people. The *priyayi* had to try and harness the power of these groups, to prevent them attracting unfavourable Dutch attention, and to make use of their authority. In many cases this was done by striking a bargain with the men involved by, for example, appointing the most feared leader as village head or *Mantri Polisi*. The gentlemen in The Hague might not have approved, but it was very much in the tradition of *priyayi*-village collaboration.

The native official had to be able to work with influential local elements; his ability to control the people depended on his sensitivity to social differentiation and the extent to which he could capitalize on his aura of authority. The *priyayis*' relationship with the people was authoritarian and paternalistic; they were expected to care for the peasants as if they were their children while ruling them with a rod of iron. Yet many *priyayi* despised the village and its inhabitants, seeing them as ignorant, labouring men knowing nothing of the refinements which set man apart from the beasts. Sartono Kartodirdjo has remarked that the relationship between peasant and lord contained contradictory elements of allegiance and alienation;[8] it would be as wrong to underestimate the distrust and contempt as to deny the positive bond which often existed where *priyayi* families had ruled well for many generations.

[8] S. Kartodirdjo, 'Agrarian radicalism in Java: its setting and development' in C. Holt (ed.), *Culture and Politics in Indonesia*, pp. 83-5.

CHAPTER 3
PANGREH PRAJA AND BB

Ideally, the native officials were benevolent dictators over the people, and each was in turn subject to the same sort of dictatorship from his superiors. The bond between superior and subordinate *priyayi*, like that between *priyayi* and people, was said to be a continuation of the classic Javanese *kawula-gusti* (servant-lord) relationship. This was a tie of unquestioning command and obedience, but it was also warmly personal, a close inter-dependence of two people. It was modelled on the family connection between brothers or father and son, and infused with ideas of chivalry, of the religious *guru-murid* (teacher-pupil) link, and of mystical union.[1] Nevertheless, boundaries between superior and inferior were firmly marked by rank-etiquette and the complex and inescapable Javanese forms of respect, and these limits could not be transgressed. According to indigenous beliefs the duty to obey and the obligation to command wisely and humanely were moral imperatives. Culturally defined personal and ethical values regulated the relationship between officials and there was no legal or institutional definition of rights, no courts of appeal. In theory the just functioning of the administration was provided for by tradition and custom, but this was not always so in reality.

Both theory and practice are well displayed in the *magang* (unsalaried official, apprentice) system by which young *priyayi* entered government service. In a didactic work written towards the end of the nineteenth century a Solonese *priyayi* set out the path to success for his readers:

> Whoever desires to reach a high rank begins by entering the service of a notable person, preferably a prince or a prime minister, at least a regent. Having once entered service he must consider no trouble too great, no work too mean, to win the favour of his master: he must pay constant attention to his master's expression, and construct his answers to questions accordingly, continually aiming to please his master. At the same time he is always helpful and obliging to everybody with whom he comes into contact. By behaving thus, gradually he wins not only the favour of his master but also an excellent reputation among the other *priyayi*. When he finally succeeds in winning acceptance into the corps of officials he must honour his rank and, by his conduct, prove himself worthy of his position. In this way he will climb in the long run to a considerable position and reach the highest that is attainable for a man here on earth.[2]

[1] Moertono, pp. 14-26.

[2] From a Dutch translation in the Colonial Archives, Vb. 12 June 1911, no. 76.

Although this description comes from the Principalities, it was also true of Dutch-ruled Java. Emphasis falls not on efficiency but on personal relationships, on winning the master's esteem. The key word is 'favour': subjective evaluation and approval by superiors was the essential passport for aspirant native officials.

A *magang* was an unpaid apprentice, usually a young *priyayi* who would attach himself to an official. The *magang* would perform menial domestic as well as office tasks until the master secured him appointment as a clerk, the bottom rung of the *Pangreh Praja* ladder. The *magang* lived with his master's family, his status being somewhere between that of the higher servants and the relatives, and was absorbed into the routine of a *priyayi* establishment. This, as much if not more than his office experience, was his education. Through this service and his relationship with his master he should come to understand *priyayi* duty, his personal, ethical and religious bonds with other officials and the people. He had to learn not only rudimentary office skills, but also – and more importantly – his place, purpose and meaning in society.

There was no limit to the number of *magang* who could be attached to an official; the more he had, the greater his prestige, as this indicated his high financial and official standing. It showed he had a reputation as a man of moral authority, who also had useful contacts with officials higher up the hierarchy. There was also no time limit on how long a *magang* could serve; there was no system of seniority, no examinations: appointment was entirely dependent upon the master's favour; a *magang* had no rights. In Banyumas at the end of the century, for example, *magang* usually served about fourteen years before being appointed clerks; some served over twenty years, and some were never appointed.

The usual career pattern for a *priyayi* at this time was fairly simple. Like all Javanese children he would learn polite behavior from his parents, and be given rudimentary Islamic knowledge; in more religious regions he might attend a *pesantren* (Islamic school) for a while. But his main formal education would be the ordinary native elementary school, where he would learn both to read and write in the vernacular (Sundanese, Javanese, Madurese) and a little Malay, the *lingua franca* of trade and administration. At about sixteen years of age he would have to choose a career, and for *priyayi* this almost always meant the *Pangreh Praja*: only in the very Islamic areas did religious scholarship offer a comparable vocation.

While the *magang* waited for appointment as clerk he lived as best he could; it could be very hard, and many accumulated heavy debts. Sometimes their masters would give them a small wage out of their own pockets, a few guilders a month, but if not, they lived off their families. Their allowances were supplemented by gifts from people who sought their help. For although they were not meant to have office responsibilities, in fact the *magang* bore the brunt of much routine work. They would usually accept fees for services rendered. In 1909 a *magang* complained of the humiliations of his lot: writing letters and running errands, kept going by the hope of a job, and by charging peasants ten

or twenty cents for permits to go to Batavia to seek work or for licences to slaughter buffaloes. But such was the prestige of a *Pangreh Praja* career that many years of such an existence were acceptable. For the wealthier *priyayi* the burden was slight, a factor which attracted well-born youths.[3]

This system of education and selection was long established on Java; similar arrangements governed entry into the religious life, and also entry into the service of families and courts. This was called, for *priyayi*, *nyuwita*. The presence of boys, girls and youths living with Regent families under such arrangements was noted in the description of *kabupaten* life in the preceding chapter. The development of Western-style schools modified this system but did not replace it. School, plus a more specialized form of *magang*-ship replaced some facets of the earlier arrangements, but in fact a logical combination of the two grew up during the nineteenth century. Many Regents and high *priyayi* sent their children to live with Dutch families while attending school. The purpose remained the same: to master social and occupational skills necessary for advancement, such as knowledge of European social forms and Dutch. Similarly, the addition of a European tutor would draw boys to a *kabupaten*, but this did not mean that they were merely attending classes. There would still be the comprehensive and all-involving commitment of *nyuwita*, with the new learning incorporated. But few boys could obtain such relatively advanced education; even those who attended the *hoofdenscholen* (chiefs' schools) remained a minority. For most, the local elementary school and a period as *magang* provided their only official training, although informal instruction continued for many years.

During the *magang* years it was expected that a lasting and valuable tie would be forged between master and *magang*. This is a typical example of the importance of personal relationships, similar to marriage connections which linked *priyayi* families. Another less formal but widespread custom was that of *menitipkan anak* (consigning a child), entrusting one's child to a man of position so that his education or career could be furthered. This was, in essence, a deliberate forging of patron-client relationships.

Since promotion within the *Pangreh Praja* in the nineteenth century was virtually independent of objective criteria such as education or seniority, all forms of sycophancy and nepotism flourished. The search for patrons was complicated by the existence of the two hierarchies of superiors, high *priyayi* and the BB. From 1867 Residents had the right to appoint and promote all officials earning less than one hundred guilders per month, which meant in effect all *priyayi* below the rank of *Wedana*. The Regents were the chief native officials consulted on appointments. *Priyayi* above the rank of *Wedana* were appointed by the Governor-General. In practice, decisions were made by the Department of Interior

[3] Colonial Archives, Vb. 3 June 1903, no. 42; 17 August 1903, no. 50; 6 April 1905, no. 16; 28 December 1906, no. 8; 4 September 1907, no. 16. The detail on Banyumas comes from Vb. 12 June 1911, no. 76, while articles criticizing the system appeared in *Medan Prijaji*, 3 (1909).

Administration which relied heavily on the opinions of the local European officials – Resident, Assistant Resident and *Controleur*. Since any Residency had between 100 and 250 native officials, the lower BB and the *Bupati* were inevitably called in by the Resident, to whom many of the lower officials were unknown. It was the function of the Europeans to judge candidates' ability, while the Regent advised on such matters as local social conditions, birth and family background.

The only documents guiding this decision-making were the *stamboek* or *surat asal usul* (genealogy) which gave the family origin and *curriculum vitae* of the subject, and the *conduitestaat*, the annual report on his work, conduct and character as recorded by his superiors. The *stamboek* gave basic details on parents, grandparents and family ties with nobility; titles which the subject had the right to use; facts on his birth, marriage and children; plus information on education and a list of all positions held and dates of appointment. The *conduitestaat* (which was kept secret from the subject) was reviewed by the Regent and Resident before being sent to Batavia.

The limits placed on the freedom of BB and *Bupati* to make or break *priyayi* careers were very loose and largely subjective. The system revolved around interlocking networks of relationships, and resulted in the cultivation of personal factions by senior *priyayi* and BB, who frequently took a small nucleus of trusted officials with them from posting to posting. When a Resident, Assistant Resident or Regent went to a new appointment he was often accompanied by a group of *magang*, clerks and *Mantri*. This was usually and quite understandably resented by the local *priyayi*.

If there was conflict between high officials it inevitably spread throughout the area's *Pangreh Praja*. *Priyayi* allegiance was obtained by patronage, by calling on kin ties, and by convincing them that one or other faction was either right or the potential victor. A particularly common alignment of forces involved the BB, the *Patih* and part of the *Pangreh Praja* on one side against the Regent and other local *priyayi* on the other. This situation usually arose because European officials distrusted the *Bupati* or found him incompetent, so they arranged for the appointment of a reliable and efficient *Patih* who gradually took over the Regent's work. The *Bupati*, finding his authority usurped, excluded from government and facing a hostile or supercilious front of *Patih* and BB, would either submit, withdrawing into his own interests, or would begin to organize his own supporters to neutralize or obstruct the efforts of the governing clique.

Since a Regent almost always had wide connections throughout his *kabupaten* he could seriously impede administration. He could also covertly encourage 'popular unrest' and sabotage progress, so discrediting the *Patih* and European officials. Other tactics were also used. He might strike more openly by making a personal appeal to friendly higher officials in Batavia – perhaps an ex-Resident with whom he had had good relations – asking that the offending Assistant Resident, *Controleur* or *Patih* be removed. This was quite frequently

done. Sometimes, however, he would fail, and be more firmly pushed to the side than before. Much depended on the character of the opposing faction: if the *Patih* became too ambitious, too sure of his ability to manipulate the BB (who were sometimes dangerously dependent on their one 'reliable' source), then he could misjudge the mood of *priyayi* and population and trouble could occur – a minor disturbance or widespread passive resistance. Then the *Patih* would go, there would be a rush of attention paid to the *Bupati* and much talk of the *volkshoofd* and the 'declining prestige of the chiefs', but once order had been restored Dutch demands for efficiency could bring about a return to the earlier situation.

Although the BB were more interested in system and organization than were the *priyayi*, in the late nineteenth century they were still only half-formed as bureaucrats. European officials shared many so-called 'traditional' *priyayi* values, and they were still influenced by their past, the ways of the VOC and the Cultivation System. Patronage and loosely defined perquisites remained very much a part of their life. Nevertheless, during the 1800s the BB came increasingly under Batavia's control. Narrower limits were set on permissible activities, a defined career structure emerged and greater stress was placed on objectively measurable qualifications; there was also growing emphasis on probity, particularly in fiscal matters, but also in social and sexual morality. Whereas under the VOC and the Cultivation System the officials had had powerful personal incentives to encourage exploitation, after 1870 they were in theory the impartial buffers between economic enterprise and the people.

The late nineteenth century was a difficult time for the BB. They suffered from low pay and decreased promotion chances, the latter a major preoccupation of the heavily hierarchical service. They had also lost their paramount position in the Indies social scale; they were no longer the most sumptuous entertainers, the sole makers of decisions and guardians of Dutch interests. Now it was the plantation administrators, the *Tuan Besar* (Great Master) of the sugar or tobacco lands, who possessed the finest carriages and the biggest houses, and controlled the foundations of colonial prosperity. The BB were becoming more administrators and less of a ruling class.[4]

As the government gradually disengaged itself from direct economic involvement the image of Java began to change from that of a conquered province ripe for plunder to that of a land to be raised up, part of the White Man's Burden. Patronage and corruption became less open and spectacular than before. The exercise of favouritism became more a matter of suggestion in

[4] Coolhaas, pp. 53-4; H.E.B. Schmalhausen, *Twee Onderwerpen van Actueel Belang op Koloniaal Gebied* (Surabaya, 1899) pp. 1-49; A.J.H. Eyken, *Lotsverbetering voor de Inlandsche Bestuursambtenaren op Java en Madoera* ('s-Gravenhage, 1909) pp. 1-10. On the composition of the BB, see J.J.V., 'De formatie van het Europeesch personeel bij het Binnenlandsch Bestuur op Java en Madoera', *Tijdschrift voor het Binnenlandsch Bestuur* (hereafter *TBB*), 5 (1891) pp. 341-54.

certain circles than a matter of purchase or the direct choice of nephews or brothers-in-law. Inevitably the scope for nepotism declined as educational prerequisites were established, although it was still felt necessary to pass regulations limiting the degree of family relationship between BB officials in the early nineteen-hundreds.

European officials of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were greatly influenced by the *priyayi* in both their professional and personal lives. Their houses, food, clothes, language, wives and entertainments were usually drawn in part from Javanese sources, as they created their own *mestizo* version of the aristocratic good life. The techniques and attitudes they brought to their work also derived from both native and European worlds – and in the eighteenth century at least the latter was not so very far removed from the former. This 'Javanization' of the BB, and the far more uneven and superficial Westernization of the *priyayi*, was to some extent a mingling of two traditions, but not all the customs described by the Dutch as 'traditional Javanese' were really indigenous practice. For example, as was noted above, the hereditary principle for Regents was, if anything, a product of specific colonial needs, although it was usually defended as a basic native institution. Similar reservations must be expressed about the 'traditional' nature of the *hormat* (deference) syndrome as it existed in nineteenth and twentieth century administrative circles.

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The *hormat* pattern was the result of colonial administrative application of native etiquette. The *priyayi* emphasized that specific forms of behaviour, manner, language and dress were appropriate to particular social situations, and that it was imperative the forms used reflect the social ranks of those involved. Dutch officials as well as Javanese expected that their subordinates would show them the proper *hormat*. It was customary that a lower *priyayi* calling upon a higher official would dismount from his horse or vehicle and approach the building on foot, wearing clothing, particularly *batik* (patterned cloth) and *kris* which suited his relatively humble status, and enter bare-footed and without spectacles. If he was especially careful he would take off his shoes before entering the compound, perhaps hiding them under a bush, but if he was more confident, and the higher official did not have a reputation as being – in the stock phrase – *gila hormat* (insane about *hormat*), then he would shed his footwear by the entrance. Usually he would go into the building by a side door or even the back, as the front door was for important people. He would then wait, sitting on a mat on the floor or even outside the entrance until his superior was prepared to see him.

When called, the *priyayi* would enter humbly, in the crouching *jalan jongkok* walk, making the *sembah* and speaking very high Javanese; he would *sembah* each time he spoke from his position sitting on the floor. Before departing he would beg leave and back slowly from the room with *sembah* at

appropriate intervals. In his everyday behaviour he would be careful never to act in any way above his station; all aspects of his own and his wife's life-style and social demeanour would be geared to suit his rank. With slight modifications these customs remained in force in most of Java into the 1930s, and in some situations well into the period of the Republic. *Hormat* was a major polarizing issue – or to be more precise a manifestation of deeper issues – within the *Pangreh Praja* throughout the late colonial period.

On the whole Dutch officials found such Javanese practice congenial; VOC officials adopted the full panoply of attendants and *payung*, while Daendels, as we have seen, moved to raise the rank attributes of the Residents at court to a suitably high level. But by the late nineteenth century voices were already being raised against *hormat*, particularly because of the excessive demands of some non-Javanese, as not only European officials but also private individuals expected the full range of deferences. Several observers commented that during the nineteenth century *hormat* had in fact become more elaborate and native officials more subservient than had been the case earlier, although others doubted this.[5] The paradox that so-called traditional usages became more common during relatively modern times is not so surprising considering relationships within the administration.

Lower officials, with little security of office or protection against their superiors, were dependent on the goodwill of the higher officials for their progress, and so there was an inevitable tendency for *hormat* to be developed beyond etiquette into an elaborate and institutionalized form of sycophancy, and so in some ways it was more a product of the colonial system then of Javanese tradition. This was especially true of *hormat* by *priyayi* towards non-Javanese, for while many did not resent using it towards Regents and in fact found it natural to do so, they felt less comfortable when crouching before a *Controleur* in his early twenties, or when using the most elevated Javanese to an *Indo* clerk or Chinese.

This feeling was accentuated by the spread of Western education and knowledge of Dutch, and indeed, the language question developed into an issue in its own right. Many educated *priyayi*, proud of their mastery of Dutch and European social forms, found it hard to speak high Javanese to a BB man who often only had a rough grasp of the language and would answer them in simple Malay, but many European officials insisted on this as their due. The central government was converted against 'exaggerated *hormat*' by the end of the nine-

[5] C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Ambtelijke Adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje 1889-1936* (edited by E. Gobée and C. Adriaanse) (The Hague, 1957 and 1959) Vol. II, pp. 1019-40; P.A. Hadiningrat, 'De achteruitgang van het prestige der Inlandsche hoofden en de middelen om daarin verbetering te brengen', *TBB*, 17 (1899) pp. 380-1; '"Kaoem Koeno", de regenten en de Javaansche beweging', *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, 2 (1913) pp. 575-81. Resentment against BB arrogance in *hormat* enforcement was expressed by 'A Regent', 'Nota betreffende de verhouding tusschen het Europeesch en het Inlandsch Bestuur op Java en Madoera', *De Indische Gids*, 11, ii (1889) pp. 1521-40.

teenth century and began issuing regular circulars asking for moderation. But this was one of the more striking examples of disagreement between local officials and Batavia and the circulars had little effect.

Most local BB believed that these 'traditional' elements were necessary to maintain the authority of *Bupati* and *priyayi*. But there were a few Europeans who disagreed and argued for modernization. While this group was very small, it was destined to be influential in the early twentieth century, particularly through the work of C. Snouck Hurgronje and his successors as Advisers for Native Affairs.

Snouck was a Leiden graduate who specialized in Islam. After teaching at Leiden he became an adviser to the Netherlands Indian government, studying Islam in Java and other parts of Indonesia, most notably Aceh, where a bitter war was being fought against the Dutch. From 1906 on he was back in Leiden, an extremely powerful influence on policy. He and his successors were strongly disliked by conservative BB men, who thought the Advisers dangerously liberal and far too friendly with the natives.[6] From about 1898 on Snouck consistently advocated Westernization of the *Pangreh Praja*. Young *priyayi* should be removed at an early age from their own milieu, as it inhibited the development of sound moral and intellectual characteristics. They should live with genuinely European families while attending suitable schools, including the HBS (*Hogere Burgerschool*), Dutch High School. With this or equivalent training the native officials would be quite capable of taking over much local administration from the *Controleur* and Assistant Resident. It was essential, stressed Snouck, that the *priyayi* be given such responsibility, as their degradation into servile tools of the BB had come about because of the conditions under which they worked, not because of any inherent inferiority or lack of moral fibre. He hoped for the creation of a racially unified, highly educated administrative corps in which university-trained Dutch officials supervised from the Residency capital, while day-to-day government was in the hands of *priyayi* officials who were free of the petty authoritarian nagging characteristic of the existing situation.

Snouck dismissed criticism from the 'routine men' of the BB: they were too rooted in their ways to see the need for change, too biased to admit reform could work and too inflexible to achieve a reasonable relationship with the few educated *priyayi*. He criticized Batavia for drawing its ideas from the BB, the group most prejudiced against administrative reform. Snouck was pessimistic, convinced that even if the government did agree to reform it never would take bold steps (such as abolishing the division between BB and *Pangreh Praja*). It was more likely to introduce sudden changes within the existing framework, judging each as a 'test case' and refusing to allow for social realities or periods

[6] On Snouck see, among others, Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun* pp. 20-31. Subsequent Advisers were G.A.J. Hazeu (1906-12), D.A. Rinkes (1913-16), R.A. Kern (1920-22, 1923-26), E. Gobée (1926-28, 1929-31, 1931-37), and G.F. Pijper (1937-42).

of adjustment. Given this approach, Snouck doubted that real progress could occur, but nevertheless continued to campaign against an unjust and stupid situation.[7]

These views were, in broad outline, common to the small group of liberals within the European administrative corps and the Departments in Batavia. They felt that since change had begun and would inevitably continue, probably at an accelerating pace, then the Javanese must be equipped to meet it. They believed that extension of education and welfare was essential, for with a better standard of living and some knowledge of Western civilization (as represented by Dutch schools) the natives would not only improve their lot but would also gain an appreciation of all that Holland stood for. Appeals to turn their back on the Netherlands whether in the form of revolt or Pan-Islam (and later, nationalist movements) would then fall on deaf ears. In 1901 such attitudes gained the official seal of approval with the introduction of the so-called Ethical Policy, which will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter, but in the nineteenth century they were very much in the minority.

Only a few Europeans felt any need to plan for the future of the indigenous population. To most there seemed little reason why things should not go on much as before, although the government *priyayi* might need a little more education so that they could make reports, fill out forms and organize the people, who would remain eternally unchanging in their Eastern fashion. The majority believed that Javanese and European could never meet on really equal terms. Some such men were racist, and felt natives were inferior, incapable of coping with the modern world, and hence that it was a waste of time and money to let them try. Others felt that a dualistic society was natural, and that separation and specialization on racial grounds was best for all concerned. Some of these people respected local culture and traditions, and believed in protecting native institutions and the harmony of village life at all costs.

The more conservative BB member was likely to defend the barely formulated theories which had grown up around the relationships between *Pangreh Praja* and European officials, between government and peasantry. He would tend to think that in the administration, as in the colony as a whole, the connection between the two peoples was a symbiotic linking of separate organisms for their mutual benefit. If he were prepared to admit that the benefit to the Europeans was the greater, he would defend this on the grounds that they provided the driving force, decision-making ability and technology on which progress must be based. For while he believed in maintaining tradition, he also favoured economic progress.

An official like this would usually feel that the *Pangreh Praja's* function was different from that of the BB not merely in degree but in kind. The native officials were to use their ancient *priyayi* influence to keep the population

[7] Snouck Hurgronje, *Ambtelijke Adviezen* Vol. I, pp. 465-578.

peaceful, to maintain communication between governing and governed. This influence could only be damaged by too much Western influence, so European-style education should be kept to a minimum. And since *priyayi* prestige must be protected, then the conservative BB man would be strongly in favour of the hereditary principle, special privileges for the well-born, and a rigid maintenance of *hormat*. They were, after all, traditional.

But Western influence was penetrating deeper into the *Pangreh Praja* as intensified government intervention brought the two services together on an increasingly European basis. Whereas once it was the BB official who had to make the concessions (culturally speaking) to connect with the Javanese, by the turn of the century the burden of adjustment lay most heavily upon the *priyayi*. The common ground upon which the two corps met and worked had become steadily less native or *Indische* (mixed) and more Dutch. This weakened the native officials vis-a-vis their European counterparts who enjoyed greater freedom in defining the conventions governing their relationship. But one long-established element was retained and possibly strengthened by this process, and that was the exploitation of *priyayi* by local BB.

Many European officials had a low opinion of their native colleagues. This was graphically illustrated in their attitudes towards the *Bupati*. Some BB believed that the Regents were superfluous decorations on the administrative system and should be abolished; others (such as Snouck) agreed they had become useless but proposed reforms to give them a meaningful role; and yet others had a sentimental attachment to the *Bupati* 'from the old box' and believed that even as ornaments they performed an important function in the administration. This was in general and in theory: in reality most BB seem to have seen the Regents as necessary to their comfort, amusement and pocket if not for administrative efficiency.

The liberal Resident H.E. Steinmetz, a Batavia born BB reformer who thought along similar lines to Snouck Hurgronje, has left a vivid if possibly exaggerated account of relationships between *priyayi* and BB in the late nineteenth century. According to Steinmetz a Regent had eleven functions: to receive the BB when they were travelling; to ride behind them on *tournée* usually with nothing to say should he be asked questions; to provide lodgings for European officials should they have no house; to put up visiting foreigners; to provide champagne on the occasion of a Resident's arrival or departure; to lend horses and furniture to the BB and, in smaller towns, to other Dutchmen as well; to give parties to relieve local Europeans' boredom; to lend the *kabupaten* for entertainments if there was no other suitable place; to appear with the *Raden Ayu* at boring official dinners; to attend 'a few legal functions'; and finally to give advice on miscellaneous minor administrative matters.[8]

[8] H.E. Steinmetz ('Eckart'), *Indische Brieven aan een Staatsraad* (Haarlem, 1888) p.150.

Raden Tumenggung Danoeningrat, Regent of Magelang, c. 1871.

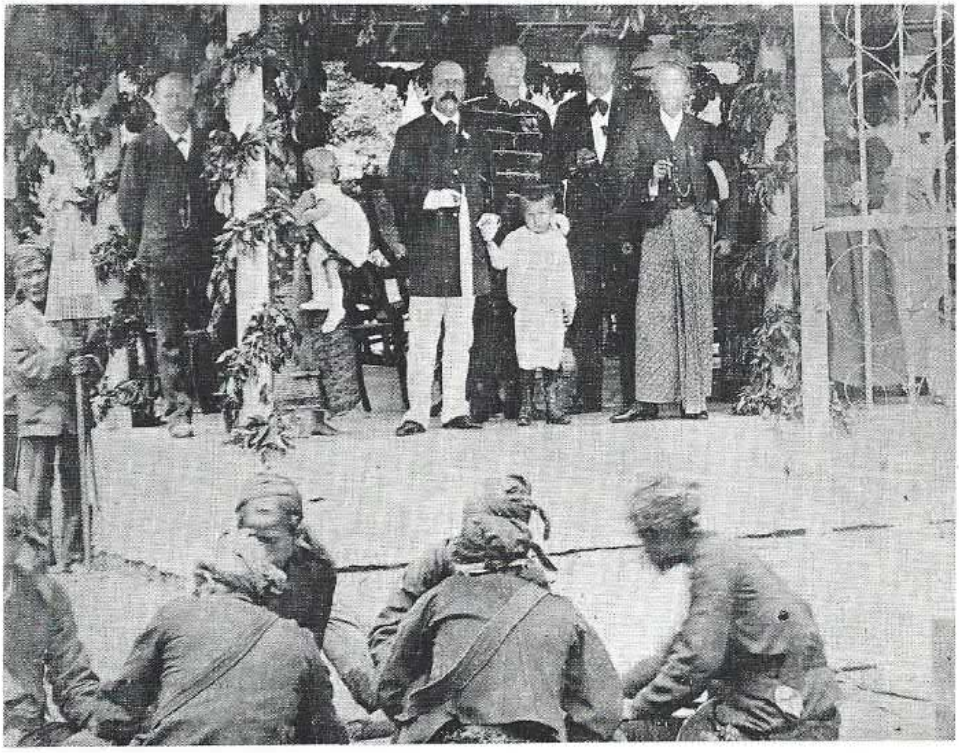
Raden Adipati Tjondronegoro,
Regent of Serang, c. 1865.

Regent and Family

Raden Mas Tumenggung Tjokronegoro III
(Regent of Blora), with his family, c. 1900.
Note the European style of his children.

Regent of Blora on *tournee.*

The *pendopo* of the Regent of Rengasbitung; the figures in the foreground are *oppassers,* messengers and official henchmen of *Pangreh Praja* officials.



Inauguration of the Garut Regency Council, 1926.

Chairman and Members of the Sumedang Regency Council, late 1920s.

Steinmetz was strongly critical of the BB, blaming them for the *Bupati's* decline into futility. He pointed out that effective responsibility was concentrated in the hands of the Assistant Resident, *Controleur* and *Wedana*. He opposed the hereditary principle, which he regarded as a great injustice towards the other *priyayi*, and accused Batavia of ignorance of social reality and of exaggerating the Regents' influence. Like those later sharp observers of the administrative scene G.L. Gonggrijp ('Opheffer') and H.J. van Mook, Steinmetz felt that birth was credited with too large a role in *priyayi* authority, and the impact of personality and sheer efficiency was underestimated.[9] But acceptance of this idea would have forced a radical rethinking of policy, and it remained heterodox.

In his book Steinmetz ironically describes the claustrophobic atmosphere of a small administrative capital in Java, with the Europeans clustered in the *soos* (*societeit*, club) spending their time in drinking and malicious gossip. As a rule they ignored the native world unless, he wrote, they had had a few glasses of wine and were in an isolated village .... The BB clung together, with a strong sense of beleaguered solidarity. All took advantage of the *Pangreh Praja* who made every effort to keep in favour with the Europeans, the superiors upon whom their livelihood depended.

This unequal relationship between native officials and BB was well displayed during that typical nineteenth century Indies institution, the *vendutie* (auction), held to dispose of a departing official's belongings. Steinmetz describes one such occasion at some length, when a Resident was leaving an inland capital in Java. Europeans from the surrounding areas all came into town for the big event. The old hands were quick to discover a sudden friendship for the Regent or *Patih*, so acquiring lodgings suited to their status, and all took advantage of native officials' kind offers of meals and hospitality. The Assistant Resident went everywhere by carriage, his high rank underlined by the presence of two 'canaries' on the back of the vehicle: native police in their yellow jackets. The Resident himself was busy mixing with everyone, being extremely affable (particularly to local Chinese) while the subscription list for his gift was circulated.

When the actual auction began all the native officials were present: they could not afford to stay away, but they could barely afford to attend. Bidding ran very high. Tea cups worth sixty cents, for example, might sell for five hundred guilders. Almost all *priyayi* would buy something, often spending over a month's salary to show their appreciation of the departing official. This was duly noted by the other BB attending, most of whom would one day send their own belongings to the auctioneer's block and would expect similar generosity

[9] G.L. Gonggrijp, 'De Regentsbenoemingen op Java', *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, 5 (1916) pp. 1028-32; H.J. van Mook, 'Een academische opleiding voor het Inlandsch Bestuur op Java', *Koloniaal Studien*, 14, i (1930) p. 15.

from their subordinates. Champagne flowed and finally, when the selling was done, the Europeans and their families retired for a pleasant *rijsttafel* (generous quasi-Javanese meal) provided by the local *priyayi*.[10] The whole *vendutie* was little more than an opportunity for local natives and Chinese to purchase European favour.

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By the end of the nineteenth century sumptuous living and high-handedness by officials, both Javanese and European, was coming under increasing censure; the old ways were dying out. The new mood was all for the protection of the *wong cilik*, the 'little people' who had suffered under earlier exploitation. This was largely a result of changes in Indies' economic interests and in the political mood of the Netherlands, but it also reflected the newly-sensitized conscience of the Dutch. They had been deeply moved by the sad tale of Saijah and Adinda and the loss of their buffalo to the cruel Regent, as narrated in E. Douwes Dekker's famous novel *Max Havelaar* (1860).

Douwes Dekker had been appointed Assistant Resident of Lebak in 1856 after a career in the Outer Islands (i.e. Indies islands beyond Java). His conflict with the *Bupati* RA Karta Nata Negara (1837-65) and the experienced Resident C.P. van Brest van Kempen ('Slijmering' in the novel) was a classic confrontation between the old BB and *Pangreh Praja* and the idealistic (if, in this case, somewhat hasty) new generation. While the Regent's tyranny over the people deeply distressed the young Assistant Resident, who tried to stop it, it did not seem to upset the population. The *Bupati* was typical of the old style, extortionate yet paternalistic popular chief, entertaining magnificently and providing popular spectacles (even if the poeple subsidized them), credited with the power to curse so effectively he could kill fruit trees, bleeding the people yet giving them gifts, demanding, capricious and always interesting. He was feared and respected; after his death his grave became a centre of popular reverence. He was arrogant towards the Dutch, and opposed by a local *priyayi* faction (which may well have been the indirect cause of Dekker's downfall), but he was influential and therefore useful. As this was recognized by both Brest van Kempen and Batavia, it was inevitable that when the situation became intolerable in Lebak it was Dekker who left in disgrace, not the Regent.[11] The young Assistant Resident was ahead of his time: in the 1850s all Dekker could call on was moral indignation, there was no alternative to the old style *priyayi*. But forty years later there was such an alternative, and the days of the Karta Nata Negaras were numbered.

[10] Steinmetz, *Indische Brieven* pp. 39-52.

[11] R.A. van Sandick, *Leed en Lief uit Banten* (Zutphen, 1892) pp. 177-240; R. Nieuwenhuis, 'De zaak van Lebak' in his *Tussen Twee Vaderlanden* (Amsterdam, 1967) pp. 154-206; A. Besnard, 'Verstoorde persoonlijkheid' in H. Baudet and I.J. Brugmans (eds.), *Balans van Beleid. Terugblik op de Laatste Halve Eeuw van Nederlandsch-Indie* (Assen, 1961) pp. 105-8.

By the 1890s there was a small group of Javanese who could meet the European world on its own terms, men such as the Tjondronegoro *Bupati* or Haji Mohammed Moesa of Garut, who published articles and joined learned societies. Snouck Hurgronje could point to young *priyayi* graduates of the HBS who were fluent in Dutch, well-educated and, he maintained, as capable of governing as the average Dutchman. As will be described below, there were Regents' sons, members of the Pakualaman royal house, Sumatrans and Minahassans studying in the Netherlands, some even attending University. In Java itself there was a steady increase in the number of natives seeking Western education, many attending the ELS (*Europeesche Lagere School*, Dutch primary school) where they learnt how to speak correct Dutch and mix with Europeans; some even gained their diploma.

There were other signs of change in the *priyayi* world, the development of a quasi-European atmosphere in entertainments and life-style. Native officials were drinking whisky-sodas, dancing and playing European card games, even though this was probably more an onerous effort to please the Europeans than a matter of genuine preference. In 1900 one of the arguments in favour of supporting a *priyayi* co-operative was the help it could offer in meeting new expenses such as purchasing the *air belanda* ('Dutch' i.e. mineral water) which was *de rigeur* when entertaining Europeans, or buying a tea service, as well as the more usual necessities of suitable clothes, pens and so on.

With the trend towards limited Westernization social relations between high native officials and Dutchmen tended to be conducted more in the Western mode, particularly in those towns which had a sizeable European population. Certain Regents were even admitted – after careful consideration – to the *soos*, the club, and younger, educated *priyayi* became increasingly at ease in Dutch circles. Membership in various associations was also an important factor in extending contact between Europeans and *priyayi*; the Freemasons' lodges and the Theosophical societies in particular welcomed suitable native members.

By the early 1900s an intelligent interest in horse-racing and the ability to play tennis became as much the mark of the urbane *priyayi* as skill in the *tandak* (dance) or hunting had been for an earlier generation. The arrival of the motor-car around the turn of the century had profound effects on both the professional and social life of those Javanese who could afford it, mainly Regents. Tours of duty became short excursions from the *kabupaten* instead of journeys of several days or even weeks among the people, sleeping overnight in villages and in the houses of subordinate officials. More and more native officials spent their days at their desks, on the tennis courts or in the clubs rather than in the rural areas.

The extent of such changes is difficult to pinpoint, but they were of great significance, altering the way in which the native officials thought of themselves and of their relationships with both the people and the colonial authorities. Not all European officials were pleased with this. When in 1909, for example, a

Regent asked leave of the Assistant Resident to attend a congress of one of the new native organizations, the BB man replied 'When a *Bupati* asks for leave to attend a theatrical performance, a *tajuban* or dance party or other feast, I have no objection, but for a visit to a congress I cannot give permission.'[12] A majority of BB officials was conservative and often hostile to the new styles – dislike of 'educated natives' was a very common attitude among colonial officials everywhere – but the trend towards change was established and gained momentum in the early twentieth century.

The *priyayi* were the native group in closest contact with the Europeans; they had relatively easy access to Western education and their working environment was to a large extent shaped by Dutch decisions. This last point was particularly true as administration in Java became more elaborate and tightly organized, with the native chiefs under increasing pressure to be better bureaucrats. As the established indigenous elite, the *priyayi* were also caught up in currents in the wider society. The effect of social change and bureaucratization on the native officials forms the major theme of the following chapter.

12 Quoted in A. Nagazumi, *The Dawn of Indonesian Nationalism. The Early Years of the Budi Utomo, 1908-1918* (Tokyo, 1972) p. 61. On changing life style see, for example, D.H. Burger, *Structural Changes in Javanese Society: the Supra-Village Sphere* (translated by L.H. Palmier) (Ithaca, New York, 1956) pp. 18-19; A. Djajadiningrat, *Herinneringen* (Amsterdam/Batavia, [c. 1936]) pp. 211-12.

CHAPTER 4
PATRONS, CLIENTS AND *PRIYAYI* EDUCATION

Shifts in leadership patterns within the native community became obvious in the decade preceding the first World War. Existing relationships between peasants and *priyayi, Pangreh Praja* and BB were unable to absorb and manage new tensions and discrepancies. During the later nineteenth century it had been recognized that administrative reform was necessary, and it was assumed that this alone would enable the officials to remain the sole supra-village leaders of the people. This assumption proved to be unfounded. It is true that most of the earliest progressive native leaders were formed by a well-established tie: the link between European patron and keen *priyayi* client. But new frameworks gradually emerged as groups and individuals broke free of the constraints imposed by dependence on Dutch protectors. They felt the government failed to meet the peoples' needs, so they sought structures and ideologies which were independent of the bureaucracy, which could support and legitimize their demands for welfare and justice. Organizations ranged from burial or trading associations, new variations on old themes, to innovations such as trade unions and political parties. This activity was welcomed by some Europeans as a sign of progress, in accord with the recently enlightened colonial policy, but it was bitterly opposed by others, who saw it for what it was: an implicit challenge to the authority of the officials.

In 1901 Queen Wilhelmina formally introduced a new colonial era when she spoke of the Netherlands' 'ethical obligation and moral responsibility' to the Indies. This Ethical Policy was brought into being through the unlikely interaction of big Capital, Christian political parties, and liberal humanitarianism. The influence of private capital was extremely strong in both The Hague and Batavia, and businessmen used their political weight to facilitate exploitation. They wanted freedom from irksome restrictions, a steady labour supply, security for investments, more prosperous markets, and government development of the economic infrastructure needed to support expansion. This meant direct government intervention in local society, which also suited the coalition of Christian conservative parties then in power.

These parties were fired by a sense of mission, a desire to enrich the Netherlands and raise up the natives. Although they were in opposition, leftist parties also wanted a more active policy. All agreed something must be done to benefit the natives, whose increased well-being would, they believed, be to the ultimate advantage of the Netherlands. Expansion, efficiency, and welfare were the watch-words, and the plan of campaign rested heavily on state development programs and education.

Post-1900 reformers emphasizing native progress were, with varying degrees of scorn or admiration, labelled 'Ethici'. But the Ethical Policy never really succeeded in winning the support of all, or even most, BB men. To many Indies officials it was best to keep native and European worlds firmly separate:

education for the 'brown brother' would only create marginal men with ideas above their station. In reality, of course, there had always been contact between *priyayi* and Dutchmen in the nineteenth century *Indische* world. There had always been Europeans who acted as a link, and some enabled a few natives to obtain formal schooling and hence an entrée into the fringes of the Western sphere.

The biographies of the first *priyayi* to make this limited transition demonstrate the crucial importance of European patrons. Some Dutch families, anxious to provide acceptable playmates for their children, would invite well-born young natives to live in their household. From the point of view of the *priyayi*, this was a useful opportunity to learn something of the ways of the dominant caste and to make valuable contacts. The role of such patrons, often local BB officials, was decisive in shaping the careers of individual natives, and also added to the gathering momentum in favour of Western education.

Some native youths were even taken to the Netherlands by their protectors. For example, the young Yogyakarta *priyayi* RM Ismangoen Danoewinoto studied in Holland under the auspices of an ex-Resident during the 1860s and 1890s. Armed with proper qualifications he tried to enter the BB, but the prospect of a Javanese *Controleur* or Resident was unacceptable, so he was placed in the native education service. Similar patrons helped RA Djojoadiningrat, Regent of Rembang (1889-1912), and a *Bupati* of Madiun, Pangeran Ronggo Ario Koesnodiningrat (1900-29), both of whom attended schools in Holland before entering the *Pangreh Praja*.[1] There were no doubt others.

Only a very small minority travelled as far as Europe however; most *priyayi* who obtained Western schooling did so in the Indies, but even they constituted only a tiny proportion of the indigenous elite. Many natives were just not interested in such education; they regarded it as unnecessary and probably dangerous, bringing with it the risks of cultural alienation and possible conversion to Christianity. Nevertheless, the number of *priyayi* attending the Indies Dutch schools slowly increased. Since 1864 natives had been allowed to enter the ELS (Primary schools), and in 1883 there were nearly 400 non-Christian Indonesians in attendance; by 1898 there were 762.

The total of HBS (High School) pupils was much smaller, disproportionately so. There were three HBS in Java: the Gymnasium Willem III in Batavia (opened 1860), and others in Surabaya (1875) and Semarang (1877). Only a very small handful of Indonesians entered these schools: five in 1890, thirty six by 1905. Although the government had created 'First Class Schools'

[1] J. Oudemans, 'R.M. Ismangoen Danoewinoto', *TBB*, 11 (1895); memo attached to M.V.O. of L.Ch.E. Fraenkel (Resident, Rembang 1901-07), Colonial Archives, Vb. 5 March 1908, no. 36; biographies: 'Pangeran Ronggo Ario Koesnodiningrat', *Pandji Poestaka*, 3 (November 1925) and *Politiek Economische Bond*, 9 (October 1928).

in 1893 to offer rudimentary education in the vernacular and Malay to well-born children, these were so obviously inferior to the Western schools that they proved unattractive. In 1914 they were replaced by the Dutch-medium native school, the HIS (Dutch-native school).[2]

Not all *priyayi* who wanted to give their children a European education were able to do so, and those attending Dutch-medium schools were almost always drawn from the higher levels of indigenous society. Parents from these circles were most likely to be aware of the benefits of education, and to be able to afford the financial burden of sending their sons to school. High officials, Regents in particular, had greater social and professional contact with Europeans than did the vast majority of natives. Since their sons also had a very good chance of reaching comparable rank, they tended to be sensitive to the benefits of Western schooling. It was a general rule that native children must have a working knowledge of Dutch to enter the ELS and must pay fees, even though poorer Europeans or Eurasians were exempted from these prerequisites. The criteria for admission could be waived by the Governor-General, which in effect meant the local BB. Here too, circumstances favoured the highest *priyayi*: they were most likely to have good connections with local European officials.

As early as the 1870s some *priyayi* were providing Dutch schooling for their children; Priangan in particular seems to have been education-conscious, and some Sundanese sent their children to a private ELS in Garut. A few native officials hired Dutch tutors to teach their children, and so other *priyayi* sent their offspring to stay with such families to share this benefit. The Regent of Ciamis (Koesoemo Adiningrat 1839-86), for example, had a group of children living and studying in the *kabupaten* under a tutor, while a few years later European tutors were also to be found in the houses of the Cirebon, Majalengka and Juwana Regents. Some youths, too, still went to the Netherlands; these included not only protégés of Dutchmen, but also children of Java's royal houses. The princely family of Paku Alam produced a number of educational firsts (first native lawyer, doctor, engineer, qualified woman teacher, and so on) by emphasizing Netherlands training, while some of the Susuhunan of Surakarta's sons also studied in Holland during the early twentieth century.[3] But perhaps the family most famous for its educational achievements was that of the Tjondronegoro, a *Bupati* clan based in the central North Coast of Java.

[2] P.W. van der Veur, 'Progress and procrastination in education in Indonesia prior to World War II' in his *Education and Social Change in Colonial Indonesia* (Athens, Ohio, 1969); C.L.M. Penders, 'Colonial Education Policy and Practice in Indonesia, 1900-1942' (Ph.D. thesis, Australian National University, 1968); S.L. van der Wal (ed.), *Het Onderwijsbeleid in Nederlands-Indie 1900-1942* (Groningen, 1963).

[3] *Koloniaal Verslag*, (1876, 1877, 1880); Colonial Archives Mailrapport (hereafter Mr) 636/07; S. Scherer, pp. 28-37.

Around the middle of the nineteenth century, Pangeran Ario Tjondronegoro (Regent of Kudus in 1836, Demak 1850-66) decided to hire a European tutor for his sons, choosing C.E. van Kesteren for the post. Van Kesteren, later a prominent Indies journalist, must have done his work well as all four brothers made successful *Pangreh Praja* careers, reaching the rank of *Bupati*. RMAA Sosroningrat (Jepara 1880-1905), was an advocate of better education and conditions for government *priyayi*; RMA Tjondronegoro (Kudus and Brebes) wrote a number of articles and books in Javanese, while RMAA Poerbodiningrat served as Regent in Demak (1866-81) and Semarang (1881-3). But probably the best known of the four was P.A. Hadiningrat (or Adiningrat, Demak 1881-1915). He followed courses on railway engineering at Delft, and worked for the railroad until his father's death around 1871 caused him to enter the *Pangreh Praja*. He became a well-known spokesman on native administration and society, winning Dutch recognition as an authority, although some resented a native achieving such prominence and certainly the local BB did not always regard him very highly. Nevertheless, he and his brothers became the classic examples of the enlightened *priyayi* by the end of the nineteenth century. This image was reinforced by the letter-writing activities of Sosroningrat's daughter, *Raden Ajeng* Kartini.

Kartini (b. 1879, d. 1904) was sent by her father to the local ELS, a most unusual step in the life of a *priyayi* girl. But when she reached adolescence the force of custom prevailed, and Kartini was withdrawn into the *kabupaten*. This she found intensely frustrating, and much of her pent-up energy and idealism went into her correspondence with Dutch sympathizers, in which she discussed her hopes and the society around her. Her comments on the *Pangreh Praja* no doubt reflect the attitudes of her father and uncle. She emphasized the need for education and the moral responsibilities of *priyayi*: if they advanced then the whole society would benefit. She was very critical of *hormat* abuse by Europeans, and found their aversion to natives' speaking Dutch particularly galling. While she was aware of such evils as corruption among native officials, she attributed them, with a great deal of truth, to the social and financial demands of office. Mostly, however, she wrote of her desire to improve the lot of women in Javanese society.[4]

One of the most interesting aspects of Kartini's brief career (she died in childbirth following her marriage to Djojoadiningrat, the Regent of Rembang mentioned above) was the conflict between her own aspirations and the expectations of society. Her eager response to Western education was thwarted by prevailing mores, and all the efforts of Dutch patrons were not sufficient to free her from the bonds of family and class. Among the Europeans who took a lively interest in Kartini and tried to help her was J.H. Abendanon, Director of the Education Department (1900-1905), who also befriended and encouraged other young Javanese.

[4] R.A. Kartini, *Letters of a Javanese Princess* (New York, 1964).

Abendanon's purpose was, through education, to create a nucleus of able and enlightened young natives who would lead their people forward. In this he was typical of Ethici patrons, among whom the Advisers for Native Affairs were also prominent. The Advisers were appointed to act as political barometers, registering shifts in mood and opinion among the natives. As such, and usually by virtue of their interest in local society and culture, they were in close touch with indigenous elites, and several at least had common-law marriage arrangements with *priyayi* families. The Priangan planter, K.F. Holle, was an honorary adviser; he was followed by Snouck Hurgronje whose successors in office were both his spiritual heirs and often his ex-pupils. Inevitably, the Advisers were distrusted by the BB, who found them subversive and sometimes naive in their sympathy with Javanese viewpoints.

From among Ethici protégés emerged not only occasional political figures, but also the first few *Pangreh Praja* leaders able to meet the Dutch on their own ground. Three of the most prominent twentieth century *Bupati* spokesmen were guided in their early education by Snouck, other Advisers and unusually sympathetic local BB. These were RAA Achmad Djajadiningrat (Regent of Serang 1901-20, of Batavia 1924-7), RMT Koesoemo Oetojo (Ngawi 1902-5, Jepara 1905-26) and RAA Wiranatakusuma (Cianjur 1912-20, Bandung 1920-31, 1935 till after World War II). They, together with RMA Koesoemo Joedo (Ponorogo 1916-27) and RAA Soejono (Pasuruan 1915-28), dominated the *Pangreh Praja* stage until the late 1920s. Around 1902 there were still only four Regents in Java who had a good command of Dutch, two from the Tjondronegoro (Sosroningrat and Hadiningrat), Djajadiningrat and Koesoemo Oetojo. But whereas the first two can be regarded as a chance aberration, the others were among the first representatives of a new style of *Pangreh Praja* official.

Achmad Djajadiningrat, son of an education-conscious Regent of Serang, originally combined Islamic and Dutch schooling, but as his abilities became clear local European officials and later Snouck Hurgronje steered him towards a full Western education. In 1888 he entered the Batavia ELS and in 1893 the HBS. After his graduation, his father's death forced the cancellation of a planned trip to the Netherlands and he entered the *Pangreh Praja* to be groomed for the succession. After brief service in the lower ranks he became Regent. He was not the only member of his family to be given a Dutch education; several of his brothers attended the HBS or even University and established the Djajadiningrat claim to being a later Tjondronegoro-style example of a progressive *priyayi* family.[5]

Koesoemo Oetojo had a similar career. He was born in 1871, son of a Pekalongan *Patih* and grandson of a Regent. He graduated from the Semarang HBS in 1891. As a young clerk he attracted the attention of his *Controleur* and also of K.F. Holle. The latter introduced him to Snouck who arranged for his

[5] Djajadiningrat, *Herinneringen.*

accelerated promotion to Assistant *Wedana*, serving under the progressive Resident and author H.E. Steinmetz. Thanks to the influence of Snouck and Steinmetz, Koesoemo Oetojo was promoted to *Bupati* after barely ten years service. Similar ties also helped Wiranatakusuma, a rather younger man. He was a son of a Regent of Bandung and very much part of the close-knit Priangan elite; when very young he lived with anti-Dutch relatives, but later moved to a European family. Eventually, thanks to the intervention of Snouck Hurgronje and the Adviser G. Hazeu (1906-12), he entered the HBS. Hazeu continued to keep an eye on the boy thereafter, and indeed one of the informal tasks of the Advisers was to check the progress of well-born native boys studying in the cities.[6]

Their connections with influential Europeans, their education and knowledge of Dutch set these young men apart from their colleagues. This was reflected in their careers, as all were rapidly promoted. Koesoemo Oetoyo, because of his command of Dutch, was temporarily transferred out of the *Pangreh Praja* to Surakarta to help clear the backlog of untranslated regulations. While there he edited *Pewarta Prijaji* (The *Priyayi* Reporter) a monthly magazine which first appeared in 1900 and seems to have been the earliest Indies publication addressed to the *priyayi*. *Pewarta Prijaji* included translations of regulations and legal decisions, as well as general articles on administration. It, and its affiliated organization, were designed to raise the level of the native corps.

Koesoemo Oetojo and Djajadiningrat were soon followed by other young *priyayi* with exceptional qualifications. In 1904 Koesoemo Joedo, son of Paku Alam V, graduated from Leiden University with a degree in Indology, so meeting the requirements for BB appointment. Close on his heels was RM Sajoga who returned to Java in 1905 after passing the *groot ambtenaars* examination. In 1907 Mas Mohammad Achmad, a Djajadiningrat relative, took his diploma from the Gymnasium Willem III while the following year R Soejono, son of the Regent of Tulungagung, also gained his *groot ambtenaars* certificate. These young men posed something of a problem for Batavia: where were they to be employed? BB or *Pangreh Praja*? Neither seemed quite right, for despite proclaimed Ethical precepts, the system as it existed could not absorb such highly trained natives. To the more adventurous, the solution seemed quite obvious – appoint them to the European corps. But this would mean that the line between *Pangreh Praja* and BB ceased to have any meaning, that the hallowed 'double hierarchy', with its roots in such basic principles as 'ruling through the native chiefs', would have to be abandoned.

Snouck Hurgronje argued strongly for this very step, stressing that administrative duality was not an immutable semi-sacred principle, but was in

[6] 'Riwajat Hidup: RMAA Koesoemo Oetojo' (typescript autobiography); RAA Wiranatakoesoema, *Mijn Reis naar Mekka* (Bandung, 1925).

origin simply a practical response to circumstances, a transitional arrangement which had been unnecessarily prolonged. But few shared his views. Their objections, as summed up by Snouck himself, were that natives would swamp Europeans and take over the administration, that it was simply unthinkable to have a brown Resident or a white Regent, that it was senseless to give natives BB perquisites, and that abolition of the dividing line between the two corps was in conflict with the fundamental precept of European guidance for indigenous officials. Rationally speaking, such arguments were soon disposed of, but the prejudices and assumptions on which they rested were more intractable. Nevertheless the wall was temporarily breached when Koesoemo Joedo was appointed as Aspirant *Controleur*, serving in 1904-5 in Magelang, Kebumen and Wonosobo. This was done at the personal request of Governor-General J.B. van Heutsz (1904-9), but after seven months Koesoemo Joedo was transferred to the Agricultural Credit Service while the implications of his service and appointment were discussed.[7]

It seems that as Aspirant *Controleur* he did not perform to everyone's satisfaction, and so the debate on racial unification continued to focus on the native capacity for high level administrative work. Governor-General van Heutsz was reasonably open-minded on the matter; in April 1906, for example, he was still undecided whether to open the BB to *priyayi* or not. On the other hand, the Minister of Colonies, A.W.F. Idenburg (1902-5) was firmly convinced that unification was politically impossible, and in fact no more natives were ever admitted to the BB. In September 1906 the new Director of the DIA (Department of Interior Administration), Simon de Graaff, stated sarcastically that although there were idealistic admirers of the natives' marvellous intellectual gifts, any unbiased observer would conclude that it would be decades before they could take over any BB work. In other words, he dismissed Snouck's views categorically and sided with the more conservative European officials. Given De Graaff's decisive influence on Java's development over the next thirty years – an ex BB man, he was DIA Director 1906-1910, Commissioner for Administrative Reorganization 1913-1915, Minister of Colonies 1919-25, 1929-1933 – it is worth noting the vehemence of this early rejection of progressive opinion.[8]

Entrance to the BB was thus ruled out for highly educated native officials, yet even conservative proponents of racial separation recognized that a Leiden graduate or diploma holder should not have to spend years as a *magang*. This

[7] C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Ambtelijke Adviezen* Vol. I, pp. 555-6; Van der Wal, *Onderwijsbeleid*, pp. 138-41.

[8] Vb. 28 July 1906, no. 10; Vb. 31 January 1907, no. 8; B.J. Brouwer, *De Houding van Idenburg en Colijn Tegenover de Indonesische Beweging* (Kampen, 1958). Simon de Graaff (1861-1948) was an ex-BB official, described by Robert Van Neil in *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite* (The Hague, 1960), pp. 185-6 as 'conservative, friend of capitalism, believer in administrative rather than political decentralization, convinced of Indonesian immaturity . . . . To his opponents, and they were many, his mind seemed as twisted as his body, and he was commonly called "Simon the Liar".'

would be both wasteful and dangerous: wasteful of talent and much-needed manpower, dangerous because it would alienate the educated *priyayi* who had hailed Koesoemo Joedo's appointment as *Controleur* as the dawning of a new age. But the existing system offered no alternatives. Unification of native and European corps had been ruled out, so inevitably discussion focused on the division of labour between the two, on redrawing the line to allow educated *priyayi* more scope. This basic question of how to distribute responsibility underlay virtually all twentieth century discussion of *Pangreh Praja* reform.

From 1905 to 1910 De Graaff, Idenburg, Van Heutsz, Snouck and the Adviser Hazeu discussed possible solutions to the problem posed by the well-educated natives. In 1905 De Graaff, committed to the existing structure, proposed the creation of 'Adjunct Regents', really brown *Controleurs*. Well-born native officials, HBS graduates with extra training in the Division B of the *Gymnasium*, would take over some of the *Controleur's* work and help the *Bupati*. This would give them satisfying jobs, strengthen the Regents, and maintain racial separation. But this idea was clumsy, and never implemented. Idenburg's idea of giving some minor aspects of the *Controleurs'* work to the *Wedana* was more practicable, and was favoured by those who regarded any diminution of BB power as unacceptable. This idea was implemented for *Wedana* in 1912 and after 1918 for Regents, but had little impact; it will be discussed in more detail below. Hazeu and Snouck, as might have been expected, pressed for far wider changes, a restructuring of the whole administrative organization. In the meantime, the immediate future of *priyayi* diploma holders had still to be resolved.

Typically, the problem was not solved but shelved. Koesoemo Joedo, Sajoga and Achmad were placed in the Agricultural Credit Service, a specialized branch of the Department of Interior Administration which had no racial division. Koesoemo Joedo enjoyed a distinguished career, but his removal from the European corps remained the great regret of his life. Sajoga did not even enter the BB: Batavia let him know that any application would be unsuccessful, so in 1905 he went into the Credit Service and worked there until 1912. He then transferred to the *Pangreh Praja*, but despite his education and experience he was forced to begin at the lowest level, as *Mantri Polisi*, on a par with untrained functionaries and youths who had just left the OSVIA. This was in spite of the recognized stupidity of such a situation. Mohammed Achmad entered the Credit Service in 1908, but soon afterwards was removed from the service and given the high post of Chief *Jaksa* in Serang. This appointment was attacked in the native press as nepotism (Serang was the home of his influential Djajadiningrat clan), but it really resulted from pressure by Snouck Hurgronje and Hazeu. Snouck prompted Governor General Idenburg to condemn BB obstructionism towards well-educated *priyayi*: it was, as Idenburg observed, against the policy of encouraging Western schooling for natives. De Graaff, representing the conservative European majority, cast doubt on such critics'

integrity, claiming complaints about the BB were made with ulterior motives. Hazeu replied by attributing BB hostility towards native progress to their fundamental underestimation of the transformations occurring in Javanese society. At this stage such liberal arguments still received a hearing, and Hazeu's intervention helped Achmad make rapid progress within the civil service; he became *Bupati* of Kuningan in 1923. The fourth early *groot ambtenaar* graduate, R Soejono, also benefited from liberal pressure. He was *Wedana* three years after entering the *Pangreh Praja* and in 1915, after only seven years service, he succeeded his father-in-law as Regent of Pasuruan (1915-28).[9]

All these highly qualified young men came from aristocratic backgrounds, so their rise did not challenge the basic idea of privilege for the well-born. The revolutionary aspect of their careers was simply that they were too well-educated to fit the native slot as it existed in both colonial structure and BB prejudice. Even after high level liberal pressure forced the DIA to seek an alternative solution to the use of the Credit Service as a convenient dumping ground, all it produced was a compromise, an evasion of the real issue. The new tactic for dealing with over-educated *priyayi* was simply to speed their progress through the ranks. This was not even an official 'policy', but an informal agreement to ensure that Javanese destined by birth and training to reach the top should do so as quickly as possible, without necessitating any change in administrative structure or stated policy. In this way it was hoped to recognize education without alienating conservative opinion.

This was essentially a short term solution. While it was accepted that *Pangreh Praja* officials should receive better schooling, the maintenance of racial separation underlined the conviction that the corps' essential element was its nativeness. Within the dualistic system, the *Pangreh Praja* was to legitimize the Dutch superstructure by linking it with indigenous tradition and pre-colonial political forms. Expertise and bureaucratic skill were welcome, but must not threaten the *priyayi's* 'Eastern' nature. Once this had been confirmed, it was not surprising that advocates of thorough Westernization such as Snouck found little support, and that the emphasis in native officials' training was vocational rather than academic. The preferred schooling was to consist of practical subjects taught within as indigenous a milieu as possible, and so attention focused on developing the training schools for indigenous officials rather than extending native access to Dutch education.

Since 1900 there had been three OSVIA (the earlier *Hoofdenscholen*) in Java. Each drew on its own catchment area. In 1905, for example, the Bandung school's seventy-odd pupils were mostly from West Java, the only exceptions being three students from Kalimantan (Borneo). The Magelang OSVIA, about the same size as that in Bandung, recruited its students from Central Java while the somewhat smaller Probolinggo school catered to East

[9] Sutherland,'Pangreh Pradja', notes on pp. 190, 195-8 for further details.

Java. Birth was a major factor in gaining acceptence into the OSVIA; this was laid down in regulations until 1919 and although fees were geared to parental income, attendance remained too expensive for low income families. Entry depended on personal recommendation by local BB and Regents; *Bupati* used their patronage to advance relatives and favourites.

Nevertheless, increasing numbers of OSVIA boys were drawn from the middle and even lower *priyayi*. Whereas at the beginning of this century, over half the pupils' fathers held *Pangreh Praja* positions of Assistant *Wedana* to Regent, by 1915 the proportion of boys from lesser ranking families had markedly increased. While this in part reflected the opening of three new OSVIA in 1910 (at Serang, Madiun and Blitar) which more than doubled the number of pupils, it also showed a general trend towards recruitment from lower social strata.

The government's decision to keep the OSVIA middle level vocational institutions meant that they lost prestige in comparison with Dutch academic schools. They also offered a far narrower choice of career to their graduates. A boy entering the ELS could become an official if he so wished, but he could also choose alternative vocations. Many of the wealthiest and best born tended to opt for an academic education; some then turned from the traditional *Pangreh Praja* employment and pursued a career elsewhere, preferably as independent professional men, such as doctors or lawyers, or else in technical and less conservative government departments with no frustrating racial demarcation. With administrative expansion, emphasis on skill and the withdrawal of highly born youths from the *Pangreh Praja*, the overall proportion of lesser to higher *priyayi* steadily increased.[10]

There was at this time also great expansion in general education for natives, including the gradual elaboration of Indonesian-oriented technical, vocational and high schools. These institutions produced educated young men with a claim to a white-collar job and hence to prestige, even if their birth-right to this was slight. Professionally, they were on a level with many middle-ranking native officials, and even though other Departments and private enterprise lacked the cachet of the old civil service, the existence of these new men helped blur the narrow identification between high status and a *Pangreh Praja* position.

The *Pangreh Praja* itself, however, was expected to move with the times. The OSVIA were the seed-beds within which new style officials were to grow, and after 1907 there was a considerable increase in expenditure on the schools. In 1908 the course was lengthened from five to seven years and the OSVIA were eventually ranked as equivalent to junior high schools.[11]

[10] *Ibid.*, Appendix Vb.

[11] Dutch East Indies Education Department annual *Verslag van het Onderwijs* (Batavia, 1905 and 1915).

But it took time for the new emphasis on training to have any real impact on the regional civil services. Although in 1891 Batavia had issued a circular requiring all candidate native officials to have had some formal schooling, in Pekalongan Residency, for example, only 124 of almost 500 *Pangreh Praja* members below the rank of *Patih* met this 'minimum' prerequisite some eighteen years after it was established. In 1907 only ten of 260 native officials in Rembang Residency were OSVIA graduates, while a year later in Kediri 75 per cent had had no formal schooling; in Cirebon it was 92 per cent.[12] Nevertheless, the new pro-education policy was decisive in the transformation of the native corps over the following decades.

In many ways, at the beginning of the century, the experiences of the boys outside the classroom must have been almost as important as their lessons. They were still young when they entered the OSVIA, between twelve and sixteen years old, and many found the freedom offered by dormitories and big cities new and stimulating. Not only did they live with fellow students drawn from a wide area, but they also mixed with local people: sometimes with rather dubious company, such as 'loose women'. Some also had contact with politically undesirable figures; exiled Acehnese in Bandung early this century were held to be turning OSVIA boys' minds in dangerous directions, and later many pupils took a keen interest in the early nationalist movement, though supervision at the schools had become tighter by then.

Although most OSVIA pupils were still from *Pangreh Praja* families, and well-off ones at that, and although the schools were geared towards the established *priyayi* role, nonetheless they did constitute a potential source of change. OSVIA graduates were a small minority, but they played a leading part in later movements to reform the corps. This is hardly surprising, as education fostered – in some pupils at least – a breadth of interest and openness to change which set them apart from their colleagues. But during the first decade of this century indications of change within the *Pangreh Praja* were still slight, expressed mainly in the existence of a handful of officials who could meet Europeans on an equal footing, and in the plans for far-reaching reform put forward by a few Ethici. Outside the administration, however, the signs of radical change were unmistakable.

[12] J.J. van Helsdingen, 'De inrichting van het Inlandsch Bestuur, de opleiding en positie der Inlandsche Bestuursambtenaren op Java en Madoera', *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, 1 (1912) pp. 182-212 and 285-324; RAA Koesoemodikdo, 'Soewatoe Timbangan jang tiada diminta', *TBB*, 30 (1907) pp. 34-45; A.H.J.G. Walbeehm, 'Zijn wij met ons Inlandsch onderwijs op Java op der goeden weg?', *De Banier*, 1 (1909) pp. 413-5, 425-7, 438-41 and 449-51.

CHAPTER 5
SOCIAL MOBILITY AND POLITICAL INNOVATION

Early this century there emerged in the Indies cities a new element in native society, an intelligentsia. Although its members usually came from *priyayi* circles they had moved out of the framework of the *Pangreh Praja* and, to some extent at least, that of traditional culture. They lived on the fringes of indigenous and colonial society, working in the embryonic institutions of middle-class urban native life, as teachers or journalists, moving from place to place and job to job. They joined a heterogenous mixture of *peranakan* (locally born, acculturated) Chinese and Arabs, Eurasians, uprooted *priyayi* and liberal *santri* who were drawn together by similar attitudes, common experiences, nascent political grievances and often, too, a shared enthusiasm for speculative economic ventures. These people were no longer comfortable in any of the established niches of Indies society; they had access to new occupations, new means of support, new ideas and information.

The press, particularly the *peranakan* Chinese press, was very important to this group for employment and for the dissemination of their ideas. The newspapers were not noted for informed criticism or thought; they were far more interested in sensational murders, sexual scandals and communal or parochial issues. But they offered a stimulating mixture of fact, rumour and entertainment; they were in Malay, read by Indonesians and Eurasians as well as by Chinese and, increasingly, they did employ natives. They were the model for early Indonesian-owned newspapers, and they also provided professional experience for the first native editors and reporters.

Apart from the small and floating intelligentsia of the cities, social change also created new occupational and social roles in Java's small towns and villages. This increased differentiation, called forth by economic development and the expansion of government, cut across the central distinction between *priyayi* and *wong cilik*, the common people. Graduates of vocational schools, state employees, teachers, and technicians, were obviously far above the peasant farmer, fisherman, petty trader or village artisan, although they were not really equal with the *Pangreh Praja*. By their jobs, skills and sometimes by life-style and attitudes these 'new' or 'professional' (in contrast with administrative) *priyayi* demonstrated that the native corps was no longer the only real means of upward mobility, that the traditional *priyayi* way was not the only form of the good life.

Such changes in the wider society brought the *Pangreh Praja* under pressure on two fronts. In small towns the 'new *priyayi*' of intermediate status had sufficient prestige and access to information to present themselves as parochial alternatives to the government officials, while on a higher level the more radical members of the urban intelligentsia explicitly rejected the *Pangreh Praja's* moral, social and political authority. Both new groups felt that they filled a vacuum left by the native officials' failure to represent the people to

the government, by their failure to help and support the *wong cilik* during trying times of declining popular welfare.

There was, however, no absolute social division between new and old *priyayi,* between intelligentsia and native officials. Many humbly born men whose technical or professional positions made them 'new *priyayi*' wanted nothing more than the established elite's social acceptance, and conducted themselves accordingly. Moreover, since birth was important in obtaining education, many intellectuals came from *Pangreh Praja* families, or were sons of government employees with *priyayi* connections. Moreover, the new intellectuals were not blank slates on which Western ideas were forthwith engraved. On the contrary, they were products of the sophisticated Javanese political tradition, and sought their ideological bases in a combination of indigenous and European values.

Differences in attitude were the key characteristics marking the critical new spokesmen off from the native officials. In so far as new *priyayi* and intelligentsia opposed the *status quo* which the native corps supported, then to that extent were they in competition with the *Pangreh Praja.* Naturally the lesser born, the victims of discrimination, were the most likely to reject Indies society, but there were also new leaders who were drawn from the established elite but who, because of personal disillusionment, moved into critical organizations.

An archetypal early example of such men was Raden Mas Tirtoadisurjo (b. 1875, d. 1918), who came from a Bojonegoro Regent family but refused to enter the *Pangreh Praja* and instead made his way as journalist and movement organizer. His refusal to enter the civil service was probably based upon the particularly unpleasant circumstances surrounding his grandfather's enforced retirement as *Bupati* in 1888, apparently as the victim of a concerted attack by the *Patih* and his half-brother, the Eurasian Assistant Resident. In 1906 Tirtoadisurjo founded the *Sarekat Prijaji* (*Priyayi* Association), designed to help Javanese children gain access to Western schools. This was part of a general movement by Chinese, Arab and native communities to organize in an effort to meet the demand for modern education. *Sarekat Prijaji* issued a newspaper, *Medan Prijaji,* from 1907 to 1912, which had considerable impact. It was disapproved of by the Dutch, but greatly enjoyed by lower *priyayi* and lesser government employees who relished its familiar tone, lack of respect for exalted persons, and the defiant vigour of its journalism.

One of the most fertile veins tapped by Tirtoadisurjo was the changing attitude towards the high *priyayi.* Resentment of the pretensions and power of the high-ranking and aristocratic was not surprising in Java's extremely status-conscious society, and had probably always been felt by some lower *priyayi* as well as by Islamic groups and common people. For despite the existence of limited social mobility, the common congruence between birth and high rank meant that there was a clear distinction between the obviously

upper *priyayi* or *ningrat* (notably extended Regent families in the higher levels of the civil service) and the lower *priyayi* (such as men entitled *Mas*, or without title, with ranks of Assistant *Wedana* or below). This latter group, like the non-administrative *priyayi*, was particularly susceptible to the appeal of democratic thought or criticism of elevated incompetants.

Tirtoadisurjo was able to capitalize upon the grievances of many newer and low *priyayi*, upon their indignation at the arrogance of their superiors. Perhaps because his own family had been removed from the Bojonegoro *kabupaten* and a 'new man' appointed as *Bupati*, Tirtoadisurjo himself was ambivalent towards the aristocratic bureaucrats. On the one hand he became a powerful critic of certain high *priyayi*, ridiculing their self-importance while championing lesser officials, teachers, clerks and *Dokter Jawa* (native para-medics). But he was also a believer in the ruling mission of aristocracy, both Dutch and Javanese. He took great pride in his own family, and reserved his bitterest attacks for those he saw as upstarts, Eurasian *Controleurs* or Regents of low birth. He regarded the abuses in Java's government not as proof that the system was wrong in conception, but as signs that it was impurely administered. He was not in favour of democratization, but he did want more consideration for the lower social ranks, more justice: he complained that many Regents were too remote from the people, 'like the stars in the sky above mankind'.

Medan Prijaji printed many letters by low *priyayi* or government employees complaining of such injustices as unfair dismissals or non-promotion, police brutality and the *hormat* excesses of high *priyayi*. *Medan Prijaji* also frequently published outspoken criticisms of the European administrators. Tirtoadisurjo had disrespectful nicknames for most government departments: the BB, for example, were the *Buaya Besar* (Great Crocodile). But towards the Netherlands Crown and the House of Orange he adopted a tone of warm, even effusive, admiration and regularly protested his loyalty. Here again he distinguished between the ideal of an upright and just government, which he supported, and the shoddy and unfair actuality which he condemned.[1] Tirtoadisurjo was very similar to many later radical nationalists in his attacks on aspects of Dutch authority in the Indies, but unlike later leaders he did not repudiate the system as a whole.

Tirtoadisurjo's career brought him into contact with many of the individuals and groups active in the volatile and creative intelligentsia circles of the early twentieth century. Many men who later played prominent parts in the early nationalist movement worked with *Medan Prijaji* before moving on to enter such organizations as *Budi Utomo* (Excellent Endeavour) or the *Sarekat Islam* (Islamic Association). Tirtoadisurjo himself founded a *Sarekat Dagang Islamiah* (Islamic Trading Association) in Bogor in March 1909, to enable *peranakan*

[1] Scherer, *passim* discusses *priyayi* ideological developments. On Tirtoadisurjo and the press, see *Medan Prijaji*: S.L. van der Wal (ed.), *De Opkomst van de Nationalistische Beweging in Nederlands-Indie. Een Bronnen Publicatie* (Groningen, 1967) pp. 70-84.

Arabs and leading *santri* businessmen to pool their resources. He was also involved in the formative stages of Haji Samanhudi's *Sarekat Dagang Islam* established in Solo in 1911. It seems likely that he was called in as an adviser because of his experience in organization, but his precise role and the reasons for his split with Haji Samanhudi are not clear. There were even links between the turbulent world of Tirtoadisurjo and that of *Budi Utomo*, which until lately was regarded as the epitome of the polite *priyayi* organization.[2]

The formation of *Budi Utomo* or BU in May 1908 is usually seen as marking the beginning of the Indonesian nationalist movement. The selection of such symbolic moments is always arbitrary and, in the light of *Budi Utomo*'s subsequent development, not obviously appropriate in this case. For most of its career *Budi Utomo* was very *priyayi*, drawing its members from the upper and middle classes of Central and East Java, and advocating a paternalistic program that emphasized the duty of the aristocracy to lead the masses towards enlightenment. However, a recent study by Akira Nagazumi has modified this image and shown that, at least in its early stages, *Budi Utomo* had more claim to be considered a nationalist association than might at first appear.

Young medical students at the STOVIA school founded *Budi Utomo* after being impressed by the *priyayi* Dr Wahidin's message that Java needed education and progress. But more radical students such as Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo went beyond this and pressed for wider social changes. Their platform included criticisms of *hormat*, of aristocratic arrogance and even, indirectly, of Dutch policies, as well as plans for scholarships and *priyayi* education.

But not all the STOVIA, OSVIA or Teachers' Training School students in *Budi Utomo* approved of radical opinions. The more cautious *priyayi*, old and young, favoured the moderate style of Dr Wahidin. Within this group were several Regents who, while far more conservative than the radical students, nonetheless represented the most progressive established *priyayi*. These men had age, status and experience on their side, and once they took an interest in BU it seemed only fitting that they be given prominent positions. So leadership passed from the students into the hands of *Bupati* such as RAA Tirtokoesoemo (Regent of Karanganyar 1903-12), RMAA Koesoemo Oetojo and RT Danoesoegondho (Magelang 1908-39). There was no longer any question of attacking the privileges of the *Belanda dan Ningrat* (Dutch and high aristocracy), instead BU evolved into an organization from which the *ningrat* could extend a helping hand to the deserving poor without actually having to descend to their level. Perhaps predictably, the tactic of seeking shelter with the high *priyayi* had ended in co-option, and radicals such as Tjipto soon withdrew in disillusionment.[3]

[2] Tirtoadisurjo, 'Sarikat Dagang Islamiah', *Medan Prijaji*, 3(1909) pp. 181-95. Sutherland, 'Pangreh Pradja', pp. 220-1 note 54, discusses other, less likely, versions of SDI origins.

[3] Nagazumi, *passim;* Scherer discusses Tjipto's ideas in detail.

The question of just how progressive these BU Regents were is interesting. While they were among the most liberal *Bupati*, this liberalism was centered on association with the Dutch and a general sense of *noblesse oblige*. Nagazumi has suggested that Tirtokoesoemo was sympathetic to BU because of his own relatively humble background. But in fact he came from a solid *priyayi* family, and he was certainly no revolutionary. It seems probable that his education and his son Iskandar's influence were important elements in his liberality. Iskandar (later Regent of Karanganyar [1912-35] and Demak [1935-42]) had attended a Netherlands HBS and returned to Java to study in the civil service division of the Gymnasium Willem III in 1906-7. During this period he seems to have been in close contact with the intelligentsia, as he worked part-time for *Medan Prijaji* and other papers and was quite friendly with STOVIA pupils. He joined in the inaugural meeting of BU and it is extremely likely that he influenced his father's attitude. His own views were much more radical than those of his father, with whom he sometimes clashed over such issues as *hormat*.

The other Regents associated with *Budi Utomo* were from well-placed *priyayi* families. Koesoemo Oetojo's father was a *Patih*, his grandfather, a Regent, while Danoesoegondho came from the Danoeningrat *Bupati* line of Magelang. Both were unusually active in public life. But not all progressive Regents favoured *Budi Utomo*: RMAA Tjokroadikusumo, *Bupati* of Temanggung (1902-23) had founded an association aimed at *priyayi* advancement in 1905, the *Sasangka Purnama* (Full Moon). But despite invitations (apparently including visits from his BU-minded son, an OSVIA pupil) he declined to merge his movement with *Budi Utomo*. On the contrary, drawing on an idea of the exceptionally well-educated Tuban Regent (RAA Koesoemodikdo 1893-1911), in October 1908 he and Koesoemo Oetojo circularized all *Bupati* proposing that they form a 'Union of Regents in Java and Madura', a move which was widely seen as a counterstroke to the recently formed BU.

Budi Utomo's policies were implicitly critical of the *status quo*; its very existence, with the aim of popular advancement, suggested that the traditional leaders of the people, the *Pangreh Praja*, were considered inadequate. So it was logical that a few progressive Regents decided to recapture the initiative. They were also anxious to prevent their conservative colleagues from getting too out of touch with the times. Association was a step towards Regent self-improvement, so that they could lead the people more effectively – and hence consolidate their dominant position. Koesomo Oetojo himself said he thought of BU and the Regents' Association as complementary rather than competing; the movements drew on different constituencies, and the Association did not threaten *Budi Utomo* but paralleled it. Nonetheless, the Association was a defensive response to BU, and seemed necessary since the radicals remained in *Budi Utomo* until September 1909, and its eventual moderation was not guaranteed at the time the Association was founded. For as long as BU criticized *hormat* and, by

implication, the Javanese status system, most *Bupati* were bound to regard it with suspicion, but after it passed safely into the hands of the more liberal Regents and nobles there was little cause for worry.[4]

After 1908 the pace of organizational development quickened in the Indies; there were needs and interests within native society which found Western-style associations the best basis for their activities. Following the example of Europeans and Chinese, Indonesians began to form their own trade unions: customs workers in 1911, assistant teachers in 1912 and government employees from 1914 on. The native press developed rapidly during the same period. Like the major unions, the better newspapers were tied to proto-nationalist organizations, indicating increased politicization of native public life.

Of all the early movements, the one which most surprised and even frightened Dutch and native authorities alike was *Sarekat Islam*, which developed out of Haji Samanhudi's *Sarekat Dagang Islam*. SI was less an organization than a coalescence of group and individuals, sects, sub-cultures and associations, all aware that things were changing and seeking a framework within which to contain, control, explain or exploit this ferment. Unlike *priyayi*-oriented *Budi Utomo*, the mass movement *Sarekat Islam* sought its followers among the *wong cilik* – among peasants, petty traders, Islamic teachers and fisherman – and did not restrict its activities to leading groups. The people responded strongly to these initiatives from the non-*Pangreh Praja* intelligentsia and Islamic leadership, and most Dutchmen and native officials found that very disturbing indeed.

The original aims of Haji Samanhudi's association were limited; it was formed to strengthen Javanese businessmen vis-à-vis Chinese competition and also, interestingly, against the arrogance and intermittent extortion of the Solonese nobility. Resentment against the nobility's *hormat* demands also fuelled the traders' grievances, indicating that reluctance to recognize *priyayi* pretensions was still strong within the *santri* community. Such reluctance seemed to be increasing, as hostility towards exaggerated *hormat* was also a theme of both *Medan Prijaji* and the radical element in *Budi Utomo*. The younger, Western-educated or more Islamic Indonesian was relatively intolerant of extreme *hormat*, so criticism of deference customs became a rallying point for those who opposed the special privileges of the well-born and the rigidity of the Dutch reinforced Javanese social system in general.

In 1912 E.F.E. Douwes Dekker rejected the racial hierarchy when he founded the *Indische Partij* (Indies Party) with it's slogan of 'the Indies for the Indies born', for men of any race who regarded the archipelago as their home. Led by Dekker, himself a Eurasian, the *Indische Partij* attracted several thousand members, including a number of *priyayi* officials. As the Advisers for Native

[4] Sutherland, 'Pangreh Pradja', pp. 224-8 gives biographical details on *Bupati;* Nagazumi mentions *hormat* in BU in passing but fails to indicate its significance (see his p. 48 on Tirtokoesoemo).

Affairs, D. Rinkes and G.A.J. Hazeu, pointed out, the *priyayi* had their reasons for supporting the party: they objected to reduced native access to the ELS, to the Regents' special privileges, to promotion procedures and to *hormat* obligations in the *Pangreh Praja.* Although the government solved the specific problem of the *Indische Partij* by banning it in March 1913, Batavia was still left with the larger issue of how to cope with the new movements and what attitude to adopt to officials involved.[5]

The first question was whether or not to recognize the new movements. Dutch response to this depended on their character: in the case of *Sarekat Islam* the decision was finally favourable, while for the *Indische Partij* it was not. The second decision to be made was whether to allow government *priyayi* to join such organizations. If all went well they might co-opt the organizations, so ensuring their moderation. But on the other hand, if the new ideas won over the officials and obtained their backing, then the government could be in real trouble. Many thought it advisable to keep the *Pangreh Praja* out of politics and to maintain it as a distinct and competing elite. Then the loyalty of the people would at best be denied the new parties; at worst be divided between them and the government *priyayi.* Although this deviated from the practice of allowing the BB political freedom, it fell neatly into line with the well tried manipulative tactic of turning one section of the native leadership against another. While the Dutch were arguing this out, some *priyayi* had already taken leading positions in local branches of the *Sarekat Islam* and *Indische Partij.* Information is sketchy, but in Banten and East Java high *priyayi* were active in both movements.

Some BB officials encouraged their *priyayi* to join the new movements. Resident J. Hofland (Madiun 1907-14), for example, urged all his Regents to accept honorary presidencies of the new *Sarekat Islam* branches. The Regents of Ponorogo and Pacitan complied, and most SI office holders in their Regencies were serving *priyayi.* But in Ngawi and Magetan the Resident was less successful: the Tjondrenegoro *Bupati* of Ngawi held himself aloof, and only retired *priyayi* took office in the local SI there. This was also the case in Magetan, where the Regent was strongly influenced by his father and predecessor, an autocratic man of the old school who bitterly opposed *Sarekat Islam.*

Many native officials – probably most – were negative in their response to the new movements. Both their strong vested interest in the social *status quo* and their position as servants of the colonial regime made them suspicious, hostile and afraid when challenged or criticized. Moreover, the role of the *Pangreh Praja* as government agents was not likely to win them popularity, and it was easy for SI or other spokesmen to represent themselves as protectors of the people against the *priyayi.* To most peasants the native officials were always

[5] On the nationalist movement, see, among others, Bernhard Dahm, *History of Indonesia in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1971); Deliar Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia 1900-1942* (Kuala Lumpur, 1973).

the bringers of bad news; they were police agents, tax collectors, labour organizers and the introducers of bothersome and bizarre ideas. Add to that the arrogance of many officials, their insistance on *hormat*, and their role in policing political movements, and it is not surprising that the gulf between government *priyayi* and new leaders was considerable.

A number of Regents and high *priyayi* had to be cautioned by Dutch officials for their anti-SI activities. The influential Regent of Blitar, having described SI as a union of trouble, deceit and confusion, was criticised by Adviser Rinkes, who was in turn accused of exaggeration by the Blitar BB. European officials in Bangkalan similarly denied reports that their local *priyayi* threatened to cut off the ears of anyone who dared join the movement.

The sympathies of most BB lay with the *Pangreh Praja,* who came down heavily on potential trouble makers, rather than with Batavia-based officials wrestling with policy problems. Sometimes the Governor-General's office had to call local BB attention to the excesses of their Regents, as for example in Mojokerto in 1914. Some progressive *Bupati* attracted unfavourable attention by their overt hostility to *Sarekat Islam*: Koesoemo Joedo's opposition to the SI in Ponorogo was attacked in the native press.

Governor-General A.W.F. Idenburg (1909-16) regarded *Sarekat Islam* as an inevitable part of the native awakening that was a prerequisite for progress. He was encouraged in his tolerance by the Advisers and men of the Snouck school, but bitterly opposed by most of the European community, the Dutch language press and the majority of his own civil service. In 1911 he described his top officials as 'extremely conservative' and 'racist', and two years later complained that most were mere 'administrative machines', lacking insight and trapped by their adherence to procedure. His successor, Mr J.P. Graaf van Limburg Stirum (1916-21), shared both his problems with Batavia's bureaucrats and his watchful approval of *Sarekat Islam,* at least until it began to move left in 1917.[6]

More organizations were formed soon after *Sarekat Islam: Pagoejoeban Pasundan* (Sundanese Union), the Priangan equivalent to *Budi Utomo,* was established in 1914, while *Jong Java* (Young Java) the first of a series of region-oriented youth movements was set up the following year. Other interest groups and communities founded their own movements: reformist Islam established the *Muhammadiyah* in 1912, while increased political awareness and solidarity among Indonesian students in the Netherlands was expressed in an organization formed in Leiden in 1917. In purely political terms the left wing *ISDV* (*Indische Sociaal Democratische Vereeniging,* Indies Social Democratic Association), a Dutch-run party founded in 1914, was the cause of most concern. It was the base for left wing radicals who came to dominate many *Sarekat Islam* branches, and later founded the Indonesian Communist Party.

[6] Brouwer; Van der Wal, *Opkomst, passim*; Vb. 27 March 1914, no. 20; Vb. 12 May 1914, no. 8; Vb. 3 February 1914, no. 34; Van Neil, pp. 184-7.

The economic effects of the First World War accelerated politicization. Within *Sarekat Islam* tension grew between left and right wings as ISDV members within the movement struggled to extend their influence. The proposed creation of a native militia caused all parties concern; this *Indie Weerbaar* (Arm the Indies) cause attracted considerable support from the more dynamic *priyayi* and Regents.[7]

Another major issue was the government's 1916 decision to establish a colonial council as the culmination of the decentralization process which had created Residency (*gewestelijke*) and Municipal Councils between 1907 and 1919. These councils had had little impact on the native population; they were European dominated adjuncts to local administration rather than representative political bodies. The few native members were almost always high ranking government employees, who tended to be seen and not heard; only rare exceptions managed to carve themselves independent niches.

The new *Volksraad* (People's Council), which opened in May 1918, had few powers: it was consulted on the budget, it could advise and propose, but it could not decide. Nevertheless, it became an important forum for the less radical nationalists and the more ambitious Western oriented *priyayi*. Debates received wide press coverage and did much to influence emerging public opinion. Indirectly too the *Volksraad* benefited Indonesian organizational development, as its formation necessitated the relaxation of laws governing political activity. All this encouraged the formation and politicization of parties. In 1916, for example, the associationist and rather progressive NIVB (*Nederlandsch-Indische Vrijzinnige Bond*, Dutch Indian Liberal Association) was created. It soon attracted several native members of whom Djajadiningrat was the most outstanding and its journal, the *Vrijzinnig Weekblad* (Liberal Weekly) published many articles by *priyayi*. To Governors-General Idenburg and Van Limburg Stirum this was encouraging, and they continued to hope that the new Councils would stimulate responsible political development.[8]

Despite these hopes, however, there were signs that use of the official *priyayi* as a counter-elite and the provision of the *Volksraad* would come nowhere near neutralizing anti-government feeling. The new movements, (particularly SI), had provided an outlet for the frustration and bitterness of common people and intelligentsia alike: since the *Pangreh Praja* would not act for them, but only in its own and Dutch interests, then intellectuals and peasants began to turn from the native officials and form their own alliances in self defence.

[7] Ruth T. McVey, *The Rise of Indonesian Communism* (Ithaca, New York, 1965) pp.12-33.

[8] S.L. van der Wal (ed.), *De Volksraad en de Staatkundig Ontwikkeling van Nederlands-Indie* 2 vols., (Groningen, 1964 and 1965); *Verslag van de Commissie tot Bestudeering van Staatsrechtelijke Hervormingen* 2 vols., (New York, 1944), hereafter referred to as Visman report, after the Commission's chairman, F.H. Visman.

A radical Javanese view of the *Pangreh Praja's* failure is clearly – if somewhat simplistically – expressed in a didactic political novel, *Hikajat Kadiroen,* written by the communist leader Semaun in 1919. Kadiroen is a strong, handsome young *priyayi* official who triumphs over bandits and sycophantic and dishonest superiors to reach the rank of acting *Patih.* But despite his successes he is troubled by his inability to alleviate the poverty of the people. He attempts innovation, sends proposals to BB officers and works night and day, but he is thwarted by the realities of the colonial bureaucracy. Decision-making takes months, hierarchy is all-important, most officials think only of their rank and its perquisites and nothing is allowed to threaten the profits of the sugar company. It is only after long frustration that he attends, as official watchdog, a Communist Party meeting, and there is convinced that politics is the way to improvement. But his superiors try to force him to abandon his commitment, so he resigns from the civil service, joins the Party and finds peace.[9]

Semaun's description of *Pangreh Praja* reality is highly coloured but accurate. The system he describes gave the people no genuine leadership and progressive *priyayi* no scope. Good officials existed, but were rendered impotent by the economic and social framework within which they worked. The frustrations and indignities of the corps drove men into revolt. Many major nationalist leaders came from *priyayi* families, but had either refused to enter the *Pangreh Praja,* like Tirtoadisurjo, or left it because they could not tolerate its petty slights and rigidity.

Sarekat Islam leaders such as Umar Said Tjokroaminoto, R. Gunawan and Sosrokardono were from civil service families, while the *Budi Utomo* founder, and later prominent politician, Soetomo was another who could not stomach a *Pangreh Praja* career. Tjokroaminoto and Gunawan resigned from the service after clashes over *hormat* and inhumanity within the corps, and Soetomo was disillusioned by his father's *Pangreh Praja* experiences and his own childhood memories of officials' exploitative arrogance.[10]

But for many *priyayi*, politics was no answer. The more flexible and perceptive acknowledged the existence of abuses and injustice, but believed that they could be remedied. The *Pangreh Praja,* they held, was the natural and best leader for the people, so they looked to reform of the corps rather than nationalism as the solution to the native leadership crisis. They hoped that a fair, rational and effective civil service would be able to serve both Batavia and the *wong cilik* honourably, and so prevent destructive polarization. But there was no guarantee that the quality of native officials would improve,

[9] Semaoen, *Hikajat Kadiroen* (Semarang, [c. 1920]).

[10] Amelz, *H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto, hidup dan perdjuangannja* (Jakarta, 1952); Soetomo, *Kenang-Kenang* (Surabaya, 1934). See also S.A. Soekanto, *Matahari Jakarta. Lukisan Kehidupan M. Husni Thamrin* (Jakarta, 1973); Scherer, *passim.*

as there was no systematic control of recruitment. The *magang* system, described above, gave no training; appointment was still by favour, and this perpetuated the *Pangreh Praja's* elitist and unprofessional tone. If the government *priyayi* were to come to grips with the problems and disprove nationalist accusations of failure, it was essential that some alternative system of appointment be introduced.

CHAPTER 6
COLONIAL REFORMS AND *PANGREH PRAJA* RESPONSE

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth century some Residents used their power to establish new recruitment and promotion structures. In Banyumas in 1877 a system was created by which *magang* with a minimum of five years service were eligible for an examination, and the youths with the best results were appointed to the *Pangreh Praja.* In 1900 Resident H.E. Steinmetz of Tegal, mentioned above, drew up a comprehensive regulation governing the training, appointment, and promotion of *priyayi* in his Residency. He limited the number of *magang* in the various offices, set minimum education prerequisites and established 'rank lists', in which the dates of appointment and progress of all officials were recorded to allow for promotion on a seniority basis. In the same year, the Resident of Cirebon urged the general introduction of rank lists, arguing that it would curb arbitrary appointments and promotions, the formation of personal cliques and nepotism. He pointed out that high *priyayi* opposed abolition of the *magang* system because this would limit their patronage potential. In his view this was a good thing as it would cut down the bitter competition for alliance with *Bupati* families.

These innovations seemed to work, so others followed suit. Nevertheless, although individual Residents went ahead with local reforms, it became increasingly obvious that Java-wide change was necessary. This meant action by Batavia, and that took time. Typically the discussions involved the Residents, through whom regional BB opinion was channelled, the DIA Director and his staff, Directors of other Departments, both individually and collectively in the Council of Directors, and, of course, the Governor-General who consulted the Council of the Indies and, less weightily, the Adviser for Native Affairs. Memos, circulars, memoranda and letters were produced in profusion. Proposals were drafted and published in the Government Gazette, reactions were sounded and new measures planned. In the Netherlands, the debate continued in the various divisions of the Colonial Ministry, in budget sessions in the Second Chamber and within the State Council. The issue was first seriously raised at a high level in 1900 and a decision was finally reached in November 1910: the *magang* system was to be abolished as of 1 January 1911. The mills of Dutch government ground fine, but they ground exceedingly slow.

The pace and style of decision-making on colonial policy is of more than abstract interest; the care taken in canvassing BB opinion, the consultations with assorted bureaus, and the weight of paper produced, all allowed various pressure groups and viewpoints to influence the final product. The time consumed also reinforced the existing tendency for reform to come later than it should. In the decision to abolish the *magang* system and the accompanying discussion of the *Pangreh Praja*'s future there was plenty of opportunity for lobbies within the political and bureaucratic structure to exert themselves, and this they did.

The technocratic and limited approach of the specialized Departments surfaced in the contributions of the Finance and Agriculture officials, while a somewhat wider view characterized the Council of Directors. They displayed the cagey pragmatism of seasoned officials, aware that ambiguity confers that freedom to manoeuvre highly valued by men working within the confines of a bureaucracy. They wanted guidelines, not definite regulations. In this they disagreed with Simon de Graaff, the DIA Director (1906-10), a blue-print planner to the core. In a July 1907 memorandum, he proposed a sharp delimitation of administrative spheres, clear differentiation between the *Pangreh Praja* and other state agencies such as the salt or opium monopolies, coffee warehouses, irrigation and pawnshop services. Each division would have a separate staff and its own career structure. Within the *Pangreh Praja* itself, De Graaff wanted to draw a line between the higher officials (Assistant *Wedana, Wedana, Patih,* Regent and also *Jaksa* and Chief *Jaksa*) and lower staff of messengers, *Mantri* and clerks. The first were to become professional administrators in their districts, while the rest were to remain functionaries. This distinction would become the basis for recruitment and promotion; quotas would ensure the correct intake both of those destined by birth and education to rise to the top, and of less educated men who would be filtered out at functionary and Assistant *Wedana* levels. Half the Assistant *Wedana* were to be professionals on the way up, the other half had already reached their ceiling.

The Council of Directors agreed with the main thrust of De Graaff's ideas, but saw no need to make a public statement which would only frustrate and embitter those destined to remain functionaries. Better, they thought, simply to specify qualifications for various ranks, promote well-educated men more quickly, and weed out the necessary proportion of functionaries as the staff pyramid narrowed. This would have the desired effect with minimum fuss. A similar pragmatic adjustment in unwritten policy was to be made by selecting *magang* in terms of projected needs. This would avoid upsetting the under-qualified.

Most Residents gave qualified or full approval to rank lists and *magang* reform but opposed any radical change (such as election of *wedanas*). The Adviser for Native Affairs, Hazeu, played his usual role of urging wide reforms leading to a gradual withdrawal of the BB to purely supervisory positions. Hazeu's proposals were not accepted, and the new structure replacing the *magang* system followed the 1907 proposals of De Graaff as modified by the Council of Directors. *Magang* became Assistant Clerks (*hulpschrijver*) on a small salary, the number per office was limited (usually two or three), none could be accepted who were over eighteen years old unless they had attended a *hoofdenschool,* OSVIA or HBS. And if the Assistant Clerk had not been promoted to Clerk by the time he was twenty, he had to seek a career elsewhere.

In many ways the position of Assistant Clerk was better than that of *magang*. The monthly salary of ten guilders was a pittance but it helped. The Clerks also had security: they had been formally appointed and were linked directly to the government, and they were not just part of an official's retinue. They tended to work fixed hours, and were not on call continually. Their responsibilities also increased greatly, as there were fewer Assistant Clerks than there had been *magang*, and they were more closely integrated into the office. But there were also disadvantages. The relationship between master and *magang* altered, and where this had been good, something was lost. The connection became more impersonal, more that of bureaucratic superior and subordinate, and this weakened the *ikatan batin* (inner bond), the spiritual tie which informed the relationship of master and *magang*.[1]

These changes in values may have been occurring for some time, and maybe were merely confirmed and accelerated by abolition of the *magang* system. How far this was so, and to what extent the old ties persisted unchanged, depended on personalities and local circumstances. But the significance of the reform of 1910 should not be under-rated: it was the first major step towards rationalization of local administration in Java.

Another important break with administrative tradition came in 1913 when the government introduced a new ordinance governing Regents' appointments. Although the hereditary principle remained basic to Dutch policy, in 1913 certain prerequisites were established: all candidates must have had some education (at least the equivalent of an OSVIA diploma), must have satisfactorily served a minimum of two years as *Wedana* or *Patih*, and must be able to speak and understand Dutch. By setting these criteria it was hoped to bring *Bupati* into line with the growing stress on education in the *Pangreh Praja* and so prevent them from becoming an anomaly.

Protection of the *Bupati* was regarded as essential. There were already voices raised against the hereditary principle, as indeed there had been since 1854. In 1911, for example, a high *priyayi* official argued that hereditary succession should be abolished, as it no longer had any basis in reality and tended to demoralize the *Pangreh Praja*. He denied that Regents' authority derived from birth and claimed the people simply respected them because of their rank. The Adviser for Native Affairs, Rinkes, noted increasing resentment of the Regents' privileges among ordinary natives, and some more perceptive BB men felt the hereditary principle was based on myth. The debate followed its usual course. Critics emphasized the importance of personality and ability, while defenders argued that the force of tradition, the prestige of the *volkshoofd*, was far stronger an element in *Bupati* authority than ability, energy and diligence combined.

[1] Vb. 3 June 1903, no. 42; 17 August 1903, no. 50; 6 April 1905, no. 16; 28 December 1909, no. 75; 12 June 1911, no. 76.

The regulation of 1913 contained little to upset the proponents of the principle: it repeated Dutch support for hereditary succession and the standards imposed were low. Nevertheless, it was greeted with delight by progressive officials and some political organizations. But this pleasure soon turned to disappointment when the government defied the new prerequisites with the appointment of Koesoemo Joedo as Regent of Ponorogo in 1916 and of Poernomo Hadiningrat, from the Tjondronegoro, as *Bupati* of Brebes in 1920. Many charged that the new regulation was just a sham. In reality, however, after 1913 most Regents *were* recruited from the ranks of more senior and educated officials.[2]

Abolition of the *magang* system and the new Regent's regulation were only part of an overall reassessment of Java's administration. In the years between his period as DIA Director (till 1910) and his appointment as Colonial Minister (1919) Simon de Graaff was busy in The Hague drawing up reform plans. In 1911 his proposals were sharply criticized by Snouck, and so De Graaff was appointed as a Government Commissioner (1913-1915) so he could modify his ideas to make them acceptable to the liberal faction.

In a comprehensive 1914 report De Graaff returned to several earlier themes, formulated in the days before *Budi Utomo* was founded. His Adjunct Regents (1905) reappeared as a sort of *Patih* to support the Regents who would take over certain BB powers and who would also be made Deputy Chairmen of new Regency Councils. The native corps was to be strengthened by improved education; a new *Bestuurschool* (Administrative School) in particular would play a crucial role. Drawing on Snouck Hurgronje – which was rather like the Devil quoting scripture – he proposed giving greater freedom and responsibility to the *Pangreh Praja* by limiting the role of the BB.

The two main devices for accomplishing this were *ontvoogding*, (literally 'deguardianizing', 'detutelization', freeing the *priyayi* from intensive European control), and the creation of Regency Councils. Both these schemes were implemented after 1918. They could have marked a real liberation of the *Pangreh Praja* and a shift in the administrative centre of gravity from Europeans to natives. For although De Graaff's proposals were cautious, others developed the points in his report until they seemed to offer a solution to the problems posed by Western education and politicization. The ultimate fate of these projects, described in the following chapter, was disappointing. Reflecting De Graaff's values rather than Snouck's, *ontvoogding* failed to free the *priyayi* from BB authoritarianism, and the Councils remained subordinate to the administration.

[2] Pronk, p. 113; R. Nitipradja, 'Erfelijkheid der regenten op Java', *Het Tijdschrift*, 1, (1911) pp. 230-6; Rinkes' remarks are printed in Van der Wal, *Opkomst*, pp. 123-4; Vb. 24 October 1919, no. 72; Sutherland, 'Pangreh Pradja', appendix V, on Regent's appointments.

Meanwhile more specific reforms were being discussed in Batavia. Rational intake and training procedures could not have real effect unless there was a corresponding adjustment to promotion practice. Here also De Graaff's ideas were central. His planned (1907) division of the native civil service into two streams, administrators and functionaries, was raised as a possible basis for a standardized, Java-wide regulation to replace the various Residency procedures.

During 1910 and 1911 the Residents considered this division of the *Pangreh Praja.* Some believed it would improve efficiency and attract the best youths to the corps, others found it unfair, rigid and unrelated to the 'real nature' of the *priyayi.* The separation of the *Pangreh Praja* from other administrative services was queried, but the DIA Director successfully defended the special status of the corps. In February 1914 he drafted an ordinance governing appointment and promotion of native officials, which eventually came into force on 1 July 1915.

This regulation established minimum educational pre-requisites for *Pangreh Praja* positions, so extending the principles established during the abolition of the *magang* system. Education had first priority and if that was equal, then seniority was to decide appointment. Each year every Resident would select youths with the right schooling – such as OSVIA, HIS or HBS – and appoint them Candidate Native Official (CIBA, AIB, GAIB etc). The youth would then receive practical training as an Assistant Clerk assigned to a high official (Regent, *Patih, Controleur* or *Jaksa*) before taking up his first responsible position, usually as *Mantri Polisi.* This meant that the well qualified immediately had special status when they entered the service. Although they served as Assistant Clerk, they did so for a short period only and on a very different footing from those who held only the *klein ambtenaars* diploma or who had passed through the vernacular school system. The former were to become high officials, most of the latter would remain functionaries, only a few reaching the rank of Assistant *Wedana.*

The implications of this were not lost on the low *priyayi.* Now that the line had been drawn they could see what they stood to lose, and their reaction was very much that predicted by the Council of Directors several years before. Poorly educated clerks and petty officials saw their chances diminish. Once they could have hoped that a combination of seniority and good luck in catching a high official's eye might raise them to high rank, Assistant *Wedana* or more, with attached pension benefits and higher social status. But that possibility was officially set beyond the reach of the ill-educated after 1915. The barriers against the promotion of non-Dutch speakers also hardened, and were reinforced by circulars from the DIA Director.

Petitions and protests flowed into Batavia. A letter in Malay from the Assistant Clerks of Bojonegoro argued the low *priyayi*'s case; clerks from Rembang and Tuban wrote pleading for greater recognition of seniority. Even those with the desired educational background found cause for complaint:

OSVIA graduates were unhappy that they were put on the same footing as HIS ex-pupils, while youths from the HBS demanded preferential treatment. But the decision had been made and Batavia stood by it. During the following years emphasis on education increased, and subsequent steps were concerned with refining distinctions and making training relevant rather than with easing the lot of the under-qualified.[3]

The abolition of the *magang* system and the 1915 promotion scheme introduced a standardized, efficiency-oriented system for channelling native officials through the hierarchy. But this did not mark the dawning of the meritocracy in Java: it limited traditional licence, but did not abolish it. Two hallmarks of administrative tradition still survived, though in somewhat muted form. Preference for the highly born remained a basic principle, and civil service *priyayi* were still heavily dependent on the personal evaluation of BB and Regents. These elements dominated access to the OSVIA and also to the new *Bestuurschool.*

The *Bestuurschool* was founded in 1914, and was designed to foster the professional qualities of chosen *Pangreh Praja* officials and low level BB candidates destined for the Outer Islands. Native students had to have already served six to ten years (including at least two as Assistant *Wedana* or equivalent), to have an HBS or senior OSVIA diploma, and to be regarded as suitable for the highest positions. The two-year course covered law, agriculture and animal husbandry, Dutch, Malay and rudimentary English, civil and irrigation engineering, hygiene and medicine. The few Europeans attending were selected by examination and committee, but natives were admitted by the Governor-General acting on the advice of the BB. Since most European officials felt the *Bestuurschool* was for future Regents, they tended to send the best born there, rather than selecting the most talented.[4] In such ways established attitudes continued to limit administrative reform, despite the efforts of central planners and the frustrations of a progressive minority.

European reformers and Indonesian democrats had their modest counterparts in the *Pangreh Praja;* ham-strung though they were by hierarchy, they still actively tried to influence their own environment. The Regents Association had been the first organization within the native corps, but in August 1911 a new movement of government-employed *priyayi* was formed in Semarang. About two hundred attended the inaugural meeting of this *Mangoenhardjo* (Fostering Prosperity), which was said to be approved by Resident Steinmetz and the Ethical spokesman C.Th. van Deventer. *Mangoenhardjo* was more professional than the Regents Association; it was not exclusively for *Pangreh Praja* men, but

[3] Brouwer, pp. 53-4; Van Helsdingen; Vb. 28 April 1915, no. 66; 19 March 1918, no.19; 24 October 1919, no. 72; S. de Graaff, *Verslag Omtrent de Verdere Voorbereiding eener Hervorming van het Bestuurswezen in Nederlandsch Indië* 3 Vols., (Batavia, 1914).

[4] *Algemeen Verslag van het Inlandsch Onderwijs 1925* (Batavia, 1926) pp. 314-8.

for government *priyayi* in general, and as such was at variance with the more elitist view of the corps. It functioned as a sort of trade union: preparing memoranda, and lobbying the Governor-General, the Director of the BB and later the *Volksraad* to obtain improved pay, pension benefits and so on. It was also active in technical education. The *Mangoenhardjo* leaders were anxious to abolish discrimination in working conditions, and campaigned for equal treatment for all races. This was not achieved, but they did win some improvement in the material position of government *priyayi*. By 1920 *Mangoenhardjo* had twenty branches – including one in far off Banten – and 1500 members, but by then there were also other movements speaking for the *priyayi*.[5]

As was the case with other organizations, journals played a major part in the mobilization of the *Pangreh Praja*. *Mangoenhardjo* published an annual report which included general articles, and there were many other small publications which did not survive.

In July, 1916, an interesting monthly appeared in Batavia: *Pedoman Prijaji* (*Priyayi* Compass). The first issue does not give editorial detail, but the introduction is signed 'St. Tmg,', which suggests that the Minangkabau official and activist Landjoemin gelar Datoek Toemenggung Nan Gedang was a moving spirit in the new magazine. *Pedoman Prijaji* described itself as a professional publication, the native officials' equivalent to the BB's *Tijdschrift voor het Binnenlandsch Bestuur* (Periodical for the Interior Administration). It was to succeed *Pewarta Prijaji* and publish translations of regulations and articles on administrative matters. But such a careful statement of neutrality did not protect *Pedoman Prijaji* from charges of bias and subversion.

Some articles published were quite critical of the government and administrative policy. In particular *Pedoman Prijaji* was felt to be hostile to the high *priyayi*, even though one activist Regent, RT Said (Blora 1913-26, Tirtoadisurjo's brother) had helped establish it. In early 1917 *Pedoman Prijaji's* editors felt forced to deny that 'we want to give arms to the very humble *priyayi* and officials so that they can oppose, abuse and revile their superiors who have authority over them, as if we had become a poison within the administrative *priyayi* group, a place where subordinates could vent their resentment against their superiors'. The editors stressed that they were professionals, only discussing genuine grievances and with no intention of fomenting antagonism between high and low *priyayi*. On the contrary, their aim was to bring the various elements in the *Pangreh Praja* closer together, to make the officials better informed and more highly skilled and, 'in peaceful and virtuous ways' to encourage *priyayi* progress.[6]

[5] *Kort Verslag van der Vereeniging van Inlandsche Ambtenaren 'Mangoenhardjo' gedurende 1911 tot 1919*, (Semarang, c. 1919); on leaders and membership see Sutherland, 'Pangreh Pradja', p. 265.

[6] 'Kata Pemimpin', *Pedoman Prijaji*, 1, xxxvii (1916-17) pp. 195-7.

The amount of smoke implied in the editorial suggests that there was fire somewhere, and it does seem that hostility between high and low *priyayi* was acute. Since *Pedoman Prijaji* began publication soon after the new 1915 promotion regulations came into force, it seems very probable that the resentment of the less well-educated was expressed all too clearly in its pages, which annoyed the higher *Pangreh Praja*. The likelihood that intra-corps tensions were high at this stage is borne out by the formation in 1916 of a new *priyayi* association which limited its membership to OSVIA graduates and aimed at improving the position of well-educated officials.

The new organization was called the *Oud Osvianen Bond* (OSVIA Old Boys Association) or OOB; its purpose was to raise the mental level of *Pangreh Praja* and village administrations, to encourage a feeling of self-respect among *priyayi*, and to campaign against the numerous evils which existed within the corps: passivity, extravagance, bigamy, sycophancy and the enforcing of exaggerated *hormat* by foreigners. The President of the new movement was Mohamed Tajib, *Jaksa* of Karanganyar, while the Vice-President, Soetardjo Kartohadikoesoemo, at that time *Jaksa* of Rembang, was to dominate *Pangreh Praja* activity throughout the late colonial period.

Soetardjo, born in Blora in 1892, was the son of a *Wedana*. After attending the Tuban ELS he went on to the Magelang OSVIA where he was active in *Budi Utomo*; in 1911 he began his career as a *magang*. As an OSVIA student, and also as a young official in Blitar (1912) he had been involved in anti-*hormat* protests. In both cases resentment arose because of enforced wearing of certain types of clothing and the obligation to sit on the floor when confronting superiors. In Blora the young *priyayi* were fortunate in having an exceptionally liberal Regent, and by 1914 the *Pangreh Praja* there were sitting in chairs and wearing white jackets. But other native officials were not so fortunate, and this was felt most keenly by the well-educated, including OSVIA graduates, so it is not surprising that the anti-*hormat* impulse was a major stimulus in forming the OOB.[7]

The OOB, like *Mangoenhardjo*, was supported by a few progressive European and native officials, and it also attracted hostility from conservatives who distrusted its reformist tendencies. It was also opposed by non-OSVIA graduates who feared that the old-boys-only organization would work against their interests, hence they formed a similar body to lobby on behalf of the less qualified, the holders of the *kleinambtenaars* diploma and ex-pupils of the vernacular schools. This gave an organizational basis to the growing cleavage in the corps between the educated elite and the under-qualified.

The first non-graduate *priyayi* organization to have any impact beyond the purely local level was the *Ongediplomeerde Inlandsche Bestuursambtenaren Bond* (Association of Non-Diplomaed Native Administrative Officials) or OIBA,

[7] Interviews, Soetardjo Kartohadikoesoemo, Jakarta 1969-1970; his biography in *Dasar essentieel Pendidikan Tjalon Sardjana Pantjasila: Wisuda gelar Doctor Honoris Causa Soetardjo Kartohadikoesoemo* (Jakarta, 1969); *De Oude Osvianen*, passim.

formed in Madiun in 1918 by the *Mantri Polisi* R. Oeripan. Oeripan, who was OIBA president throughout its existence (1918-1929), was born of *priyayi* parents in Ngawi in 1891; he attended the HIS and ELS but his main qualification was the *kleinambtenaars* diploma which he gained in 1907. Given the new regulation of 1915 he had little chance of reaching high rank. After the OSVIA graduates united in the OOB he became convinced that he and the many others in a similar situation also needed an association to represent their interests.

OIBA strove to advance its members in the usual style of a professional union, seeking more pay and better working conditions. In practice this meant trying to check the movement towards rigid educational prerequisites for various ranks, salary discrimination in favour of graduates and the general erosion of the non-graduate official's position. The association issued its own magazine, called *OIBA*, edited by Oeripan.[8]

Membership of OIBA was confined to Central and East Java, but a similar protective reaction by non-graduate West Javanese officials resulted in the formation of a movement there soon after OIBA. This was the Majalengka based *Mardi Oetomo* (Excellent Community) which first moved outside Cirebon Residency in June 1919 with the opening of a branch in Garut. From 1920 on it also issued a journal, a monthly called *Mardi Oetomo,* edited by Mas Alwi Tjakradiwirja of Cirebon. *Mardi Oetomo* was a movement of less well-born low ranking officials; most of its leaders and the majority of its members bore the low *priyayi* title *Mas* and were Clerks or Assistant Clerks.[9]

By the end of the war there were, then, various associations representing specific *Pangreh Praja* segments. The most important were the Regents Association, the OOB, OIBA and *Mardi Oetomo.* Most leaders believed that the interests of their particular constituencies were separate, even competing, and hence sectionally based movements were inevitable. There were some *priyayi,* however, who felt that a united front would be more effective and in the years following the first World War federation or union were discussed. But these efforts were in vain and it was not until the late 1920s that a partial consolidation of *Pangreh Praja* movements was achieved.

The very existence of these organizations underlined the fact that processes which created new groups and tensions within the wider society were also felt within the corps. This was only to be expected, as any shifts in Javanese social and political structures inescapably affected the native officials, both because of their position as government servants and because of their identification with the traditional elite.

The rise of new *priyayi* leaders beyond the confines of the civil service broke the *Pangreh Praja's* previous monopoly of high status. Moreover, radical spokesmen denied that native officials represented the people, and accused them

[8] R. Oeripan, 'PPBB dalam oesia 5 tahoen', *Pemimpin,* 6 (1934) pp. 39-40.

[9] *Mardi Oetomo,* 3 and 4 (1922) passim; Sutherland, 'Pangreh Praja', pp. 273.

of betrayal. The social and cultural coherence of the corps was also strained by tendencies towards bureaucratization and recruitment of lower *priyayi*. All this militated against any continuing absolute identification of the *Pangreh Praja* with the social elite.

During the first two decades of this century, then, the combination of the roles of colonial official and indigenous aristocrat came under increasing pressure from all sides. The government wanted their *priyayi* to be better bureaucrats, yet expected them to retain their useful authority as *volkshoofden*. But this authority was rooted in traditional status, and could not be expected to remain unaltered when new groups challenged the leadership of the native officials, while Dutch reforms cut at the social networks and cultural roots of *priyayi* control.

Growing emphasis on expertise also weakened the foundations of *Pangreh Praja* preeminence, as it provided a base from which 'new men' could begin their ascent as well as an alternative system of values by which they could legitimize their increased status. Just as new political leaders denied that the colonial *priyayi* spoke for the people (while appealing to democratic or nationalist ideas to justify their own claims to leadership), so too could upwardly mobile officials turn to technocratic views of government for support against the birth-based Indies system.

The reform measures introduced by 1915 were intended to modernize the *Pangreh Praja* without diluting either its nativeness or its aristocratic cast. The aim was to create a more efficient administration while retaining the old-style *priyayi*'s personal influence over the people. This was an attempt to have the best of two worlds, and it is hardly surprising that ultimately it proved impossible. The corps split into competing education-based interest groups; conservatives opposed reformers. The internal confidence and solidarity of the *Pangreh Praja* began to falter at the very time it was in danger of losing the initiative to emergent nationalist organizations, which presented themselves as protectors of the people against an exploitative *priyayi*-Dutch alliance.

This danger was also a challenge. If the *priyayi* could rise to the occasion and assert their political leadership then their relationship with the people could enter a more positive phase. But to do this they had to meet both Dutch and indigenous expectations. Whether they could have succeeded is doubtful as they were torn in several directions. It would have been asking a great deal of the native officials to expect them to take on a new and sophisticated part, that of manipulators of emergent nationalism within a barely formulated political structure. But this is precisely what was asked of the Regents in 1917 when Achmad Djajadiningrat, *Bupati* of Serang, tried to mobilize the *Bupati* as an effective political force within the new *Volksraad*.

Djajadiningrat himself had an unusually broad understanding of politics for a Regent at that time. Because of his Dutch education, he found it possible to achieve a relatively equal working relationship with some local BB, and this

made his service since 1907 on the Banten Residency Council (*gewestelijke raad*) a valuable experience. Not only had he learnt to act within a Council framework, defending his ideas in discussion, but he also accompanied BB members when they had Council business in the capital. In this way he made his entry into the world of Batavian politics, where he was particularly attracted to the associationist ideas of the NIVB. This involvement in the largely European and official-dominated politics of the centre was balanced by his contact with the Serang nationalist movement. The links via his brothers with the *Indische Partij, Sarekat Islam,* ISDV and students in the Netherlands were undoubtedly of great importance, and his own intelligence made him more receptive to new ways of looking at the world than most of his fellow Regents, and hence less dismissive of political leaders. He saw the *Volksraad* as an opportunity for *Bupati* to move into modern politics.[10]

In July 1917 various movements, including BU, SI, and the Regents Association, met to co-ordinate their *Volksraad* participation, and in August 1917 the Association met again in Solo to discuss their own nominations. According to the government observer, Dr B.J.O. Schrieke, the meeting was dominated by Djajadiningrat and the Regent of Jepara, Koesoemo Oetojo who, as Association President, took the chair. Schrieke gives the impression that the meeting was confused and rather aimless. Djajadiningrat attempted to focus discussion with an ambitious proposal, and in a more limited way so too did the Cianjur Regent Wiranatakusuma. Their failure was due partly to the utter inability of almost all *Bupati* to understand the significance of the *Volksraad*, and partly to Koesoemo Oetojo's behaviour as chairman.

Koesoemo Oetojo did not control the meeting effectively, allowing discussion to ramble on in the first two sessions and cutting it short brutally in the third – particularly when the speaker disagreed with him. He also failed to ensure that copies of Djajadiningrat's proposal reached members before the meeting, although it was intended that they should have had time to consider it in advance. He himself bitterly opposed Djajadiningrat's ideas, and the contrast between the two Regents, and the reaction to their opinions by the main body of the Association, are most revealing. Djajadiningrat's defeat had far-reaching implications for the government *priyayi.*

Djajadiningrat believed that the development of the nationalist movement and the Dutch response to it presented a challenge to the Regents which had to be met in a most positive fashion. Drawing on his own experience, he wanted to see the *Bupati* step into the political arena and take the initiative, becoming active intermediaries between people and government; this would maintain and extend the essence of their historic *volkshoofd* role. Instead of grudgingly making minimal adjustments as forced by changing circumstances, the Regents should transform themselves into dynamic leaders uniting the elements of

[10] Djajadiningrat, *Herinneringen.*

popular chief, bureaucrat and modern politician. As *volkshoofden* the *Bupati* must represent the wishes, needs, and interests of the people to the government. Djajadiningrat also suggested that the Regents recommend able and moderate *Volksraad* candidates for all political parties, thereby throwing their weight against extremists. He suggested the Association adopt the political program of the NIVB as their working platform. If the Regents would take the initiative, then they would refute the idea that they were mere instruments used by the government to eliminate opposition, 'extinguishers', as they had already been called in the press.

Koesoemo Oetojo saw no need whatsoever for the Regents to become 'political', but this opposition was not mere reactionary hostility to new ideas. He was neither a die-hard nor an indifferent aristocrat – well-educated, one of *Budi Utomo's* progressive *Bupati* leaders, he had been an early advocate of some sort of *Volksraad* and had even established a 'Regency Council' in Jepara in 1917. He was very much the humane and forward-looking *Bupati*, the epitome of the decent aristocratic governor. A modern paternalist, he believed that the Regents already had a worthwhile role and cause. They were the leaders and protectors of the people, their mission was to serve both the state and its inhabitants. Their guiding principle must remain simply that 'love for the *wong cilik'* which had always been one of the two defining characteristics of the good *priyayi*, the other being loyalty to the ruler. There was no way in which the introduction of parties, programs and politicking could serve these two noble aims: it could only lead to unnecessary strife, competitiveness and ugliness. So on the one hand there was Djajadiningrat, urging the Regents to seize the time and take over the nationalist movement, while on the other Koesoemo Oetojo held fast to traditional *priyayi* ideals.

Most of the *Bupati* had no time for Djajadiningrat's theories. Schrieke commented that only two other Regents, Koesoemo Joedo of Ponorogo and Soejono of Pasuruan, had any idea at all of what the Regent of Serang intended, but even this breach in the wall of incomprehension gave Djajadiningrat no comfort, as neither of them spoke in support of his proposal. Wiranatakusuma of Cianjur did try to organize some business-like discussion of the *Volksraad,* but his questions too were lost in the confusion. The bulk of the *Bupati* supported Koesoemo Oetojo's rather passive program, and it was decided that the Regents Association would not regard itself as bound in any way to the political movements, that there was no need to formulate any work-program, and even the list of candidates that they hurried through at the end of the meeting was vague and useless.

Schrieke saw the confrontation between Djajadiningrat and Koesoemo Oetojo as that between two political principles: the 'national democratic' and the 'aristocratic conservative'. It is not surprising that most Regents rejected the former in favour of the latter. While they shared Koesoemo Oetojo's conservatism – or rather, in his case, his faith in the *priyayi* tradition – it is

doubtful if they were as forward-looking. Koesoemo Oetojo was atypically well-educated, and much more progressive than the great majority of Regents. They were genuine reactionaries – they feared and distrusted the future and new trends in the present. Their main concern was to defend their position and its privileges. In particular, they feared any attack on hereditary succession, which protected them from unpleasant scrutiny and insistence on efficiency, and also guaranteed their position at the apex of Javanese society. As Schrieke noted, these men did not speak out at the meetings but made their presence felt by hostile or uncomprehending silences, or by occasional questions which revealed their ignorance.

Most Regents refused to recognize the questions raised by the new political climate in Java, and failed to appreciate that change was inevitable and that their position might even be the stronger for it. They preferred to sit tight, buttressed by the hereditary principle and vague professions of concern for the *wong cilik*. A few exceptional individuals – Djajadiningrat, Koesoemo Oetojo and Wiranatakusuma – were arguing on a plane far removed from most of their fellows, only understood by a few other highly educated Regents, such as Koesoemo Joedo and Soejono.

The relative smallness of this group cannot be ascribed entirely to the majority's age or ignorance. The Regents were not all old men. Indeed, in 1917 they were just as likely to be in their thirties as in their sixties – probably half the *Bupati* were under fifty. Nor were the five Regents mentioned above the only ones who had attended an HBS: at least five others had also had this experience. But virtually all came from high *priyayi* families and almost all had inherited their office; three quarters of the *Bupati* had succeeded a close relative, 32 had followed their father. They regarded themselves as a ruling class, drawn to high rank by right of birth, and so responded more to Koesoemo Oetojo's vision of a purified and invigorated governing *priyayi* class than to Djajadiningrat's idea of the Regents as dynamic leaders of controlled political change. Even if they had been drawn to the latter, most *Bupati* were simply not equipped to undertake such a role. They were already struggling to keep their heads above water coping with the sniping of local nationalists and the Dutch stress on administrative reform.

The Regents' position was not made any easier by renewed criticism of the hereditary principle. Disagreement over their right to succeed attracted considerable attention in late 1918 and 1919 after a group of Javanese *Volksraad* members moved that the principle be abolished on the grounds that it was not traditional, that it elevated family over public interest, and that it was destructive in its effects on both those who inherited and those who did not. This motion was not accepted, but the *Volksraad* continued to hear attacks on the hereditary principle from then on, including criticism by the most liberal Regents – Djajadiningrat, Wiranatakusuma and Koesoemo Oetojo. In the late twenties and throughout the thirties *Volksraad* opinion was clearly divided between

pro- and anti- hereditary principle factions, each using established arguments. With the exception of the extremely progressive *Bupati* mentioned above – and indeed, Djajadiningrat had switched to supporting the principle by 1920 – virtually all Regents favoured its retention. They did not want to see their role changed, either by demotion to the level of mere officials, or by extension into the political sphere.

With the defeat of Djajadiningrat's plan for the Regents Association's move into politics, one road was closed for the high *priyayi*. Schrieke, commenting on the 1917 meeting, concluded that it had hastened the decline of the Association and that it showed that as a political movement it was 'a still-born child'. In one sense this was true, for the Regents were apolitical in that they had little conception of how to use modern political institutions, such as councils, and no interest in learning. They also doubted the significance of the nationalist movement, as it was alien to their view of native society and colonial politics. For them, political reality lay in the intricate interplay of BB personalities, popular sentiment, and *priyayi* intrigues, not in newspapers, mass meetings, Marxism or nationalism. Their arena was not to be found in the crowded cities or the council chambers, but in the manipulation of local factions in provincial *kabupaten* towns.

But in another sense, of course, the Regents were very much political figures, playing a major part in Dutch strategy and constituting a strong interest group in favour of the *status quo*. And it was this aspect of the *Bupati* which was confirmed by the 1917 meeting. What Djajadiningrat had feared had come to pass; the Regents had thrown away their chance – even if a slight one – of being *volkshoofden* to all the people, including the younger generation, and shown that they were, in fact, 'extinguishers'.

After the meeting the *Budi Utomo* observer exclaimed bitterly: 'They must themselves know what they are doing, but such a handful can't hold back the movement of the people as a whole. How can they, who have mostly won their position through inheritance, understand the spirit of the time? The people have now seen what the Regents are worth'. Schrieke concluded that the meeting's results were a political mistake which would have far-reaching effects. The *Bupati* had seriously damaged their position in the eyes of democrats and nationalists, but had accomplished nothing of significance.[11]

The ability of the government *priyayi* to respond to changes in their society was circumscribed by their key role in the Dutch colonial state. In societies where politics and administration are separate, it is not part of an official's work to engage and retain acceptance of a particular regime. But this had always been an important dimension of the native officials' function in Java. They were not just agents carrying out policy, they were also expected

[11] Schrieke's report is reprinted in Van der Wal, *Volksraad*, pp. 193-206. Djajadiningrat, *Herinneringen*, pp. 296-8; on the hereditary principle and nature of the Regent group see Pronk, pp. 107-115, and Sutherland, 'Pangreh Praja' appendix IV.

actively to help maintain the government in power. *Bupati* and, to a lesser extent, subordinate *priyayi* provided the essential connection between the peasantry and the Dutch: loyalty to the *Kanjeng* (Lord) in the *kabupaten* meant obedience to the *kanjeng gubermen* (the lord government).

But if the *Pangreh Praja* was to exercise this kind of authority it must not be identifiable as a mere tool. It had to demonstrate social concern and administrative effectiveness. This could only be achieved if the native corps recaptured its sense of rightful purpose and was freed of excessive European control, and so Batavia tried to release the *priyayi* with one hand while tightening her grip with the other.

Since the beginning of the century, transfer of part of BB work to the native officials had been under discussion. Idenburg transferred some very minor powers from the *Controleur* to the *Wedana*, including authority over village elections, the investigation of complaints, and a few petty taxes. But it was left to the Dutch officials to decide how far and how fast such transfers should be implemented, and there was no significant increase in *Pangreh Praja* responsibility.

It was only with the introduction of *ontvoogding* ('detutelization') in 1918 that any real effort was made to curb the BB. The *Controleur* was withdrawn from rural areas, his office dismantled, his files transferred to the Regent's office. He was attached to the Assistant Resident and up to fourteen of his powers were surrendered to the Regent. But this transfer of specific powers was only a minor part of *ontvoogding*, the formal aspect of a wider and more fundamental process: real liberation of the *Pangreh Praja* demanded a transformation of attitude within the administration. If this could be accomplished the native officials would be more effective and, as Van Limburg Stirum explained, this would restore the people's trust in the government *priyayi* and prevent them turning to the nationalists.

But in this wider sense *ontvoogding* was a failure, mainly because most European officials insisted on restricting the process to a narrow transfer of minor powers. The BB in effect were being asked to relinquish power voluntarily and were expected to hand their areas over to natives, whom many of them regarded as incapable. Inevitably, many European officials resisted.

The first Regent to be granted new responsibilities was Wiranatakusuma of Cianjur in 1918. He was selected because he was well-educated and in an uncomplicated Regency, but even so it was considered necessary to move all the Residency's best *priyayi* to Cianjur. Nevertheless, *ontvoogding* proved more difficult than had been anticipated, and Batavia acknowledged that the guiding hands of Europeans were still necessary. But on the whole reports were favourable.

In 1919 two more Regencies were *ontvoogd*, Banyumas and Blora. Then the pace quickened: eleven in 1920, five more in 1921. Usually one Regency was selected in each Residency so that it could be fully supervised – no doubt

somewhat daunting for the *Bupati*. But government attitudes were changing: by 1919 *ontvoogding* was no longer an experiment but a policy. This shift was encouraged by financial problems and the current shortage of European officials. The 'new spirit' was quenched by the need to pinch pennies, the impulse to revitalize the *Pangreh Praja* lapsed into a vague notion of giving them a few more petty powers. Where the BB was stubborn *ontvoogding* had no impact, and the chance of breaking out of sterile habits seemed lost.

The results of *ontvoogding* varied, depending on the local BB, native officials and, in particular, on the Regent. The crucial year was 1921. Until then judgement was moderately favourable, as some progress had been made and most *ontvoogd Bupati* – who were carefully selected – had a greater sense of purpose (although some of the less able were unable to cope and European officials remained firmly in control). Then, in the early twenties economic crisis led to reduction of native secretarial and subordinate staff. With inadequate office support, a larger work load and tiny budgets the *ontvoogd* Regents found government extremely difficult. Nevertheless, short-comings were seen as proof of native inefficiency rather than as explicable failings of an overloaded administration.

After 1921 *ontvoogding* became part of the new administrative reform plan of 1922-5. It was no longer a controlled withdrawal of BB, geared to local circumstances, but an abrupt transfer of powers to the *Bupati en masse.* As each of the three new Provinces was created, the Regents within them were automatically *ontvoogd.* This emphasized that *ontvoogding* had degenerated into an administrative convenience for Batavia, and was no longer primarily concerned with improving the *Pangreh Praja's* local status.[12]

Despite this disappointment, the feeling continued to grow among the younger and better educated native officials that a more honest and equal relationship with the BB was essential. With the emergence of *Pangreh Praja* associations – notably the graduates' OOB and the others' OIBA – this minority acquired a framework within which they could work. At about the same time they found a spokesman in Soetardjo Kartohadikoesoemo. In 1919 the OOB decided to inquire into *Pangreh Praja* conditions and assigned three *Bestuurschool* pupils, including Soetardjo, to the task. The report, as it emerged from Soetardjo's pen, was so strong that the other members of the commission would have nothing to do with it. He refused to withdraw, and sent it to the OOB under his own name. They published it in 1919: *Grieven van den Inlandschen Bestuursambtenaar* (Grievances of the Native Official).

Copies of the brochure were sent to the Governor-General, to other important European officials and to all Regents. As the first OOB statement the

12 J.M. Pieters, *De Zoogenaamde Ontvoogding van het Inlandsch Bestuur,* (Wageningen, 1932); Benda, 'The Pattern of Administrative Reforms', pp. 592-3; W.P. Hillen, 'De verhouding tusschen het Inlandsche en het Europeesche Bestuur op Java en Madoera', *Indisch Genootschap,* (1934) pp. 299-318.

pamphlet would have attracted attention even had its tone been moderate. As it was, it created a considerable stir, for it was very outspoken, similar in essence to Semaun's *Hikajat Kadiroen.*

Soetardjo asserted that native officials were discouraged from developing any initiative because of their vulnerability. Superiority in rank guaranteed victory in any disagreement regardless of the rights and wrongs of the case; minor officials had no protection against abuse by superiors and no means of redress. Personal factors played a major part in official matters; relatives or favourites of high officials won promotion; poorly connected men were often ignored, or unjustly set aside. Victimization was common, and 'family government' – the influence of kin-groups in the administration – was rife. *Pangreh Praja* officials were regularly humiliated by their superiors, criticized and abused in public, often kept waiting for hours outside offices and slighted in many small ways, including by excessive *hormat.* In short, the report focused on the evils which grew out of the rigidly hierarchical administration, the extremely inequitable position of the lower *priyayi* and the great personal power of superiors.[13]

Soetardjo also had ideas as to how the situation could be improved, in effect recommending full *ontvoogding,* the transformation of the *Pangreh Praja* into a professional, rational administrative corps. He favoured education as the sole basis for appointment to all ranks, and wanted abolition of the hereditary principle. Standards in the OSVIA should be raised and access to schools based on ability. He stressed that the real centre of the *Pangreh Praja* lay in the middle ranks; the *Wedana* in particular were crucial, yet all too often they were ignored and humiliated. Soetardjo recommended that they be given security of office, so that they could not be intimidated, that they be encouraged to express their opinions freely and, above all, that they should be heeded. As it was, the regular meetings of native officials were dominated by the incantation that everything was *'selamat, bagus dan maju'* (prosperous, fine and improved): any deviation from this formula risked censure for the non-conforming (or honest) official. Only by softening the command system and replacing it with some form of dialogue could *Pangreh Praja* standards and morale be improved. And to ensure that such dialogue was genuine, Soetardjo asked for the formation of a Batavia-controlled supervisory force of 'administrative inspectors'.[14]

It is not surprising that Soetardjo's views were controversial. Governor-General Van Limburg Stirum discussed the pamphlet with the Residents at a conference. They insisted that in so far as the charges were true, they were directed against Regents and not European officials. Most laid the blame

[13] Soetardjo Kartohadikoesoemo, *Grieven van den Inlandschen Bestuursambtenaar,* (Batavia, 1919).

[14] Soetardjo Kartohadikoesoemo, 'De ontvoogding van het Inlandsch Bestuur', *Vrijzinnig Weekblad,* 2 (1918) pp. 103-4, 151-4, 270-2; 3 (1919) pp. 519-21, 603-5, 764-88; 3 (1919) pp. 150-2.

squarely upon the *Bupati:* a couple stated categorically that there was no BB abuse of native officials, and most of the behaviour of which Soetardjo complained was in fact 'established Javanese custom'. While several were prepared to admit that distasteful incidents might occasionally occur, they claimed Soetardjo had collected unrepresentative cases. One Resident added unkindly (but probably with some truth) that the people who complained were themselves just as bad in their own conduct towards their clerks. So the Governor-General, finding the consensus against the *Grieven,* concluded that it was largely unfounded and, in any case, against high native officials not the BB.[15]

But in fact Soetardjo gave a fair picture of the situation as it seemed to low or middle-ranking, young, relatively well-educated, non-Regents' sons – typical OOB or OIBA members. Not all areas were administered unjustly, not all native officials were victimized, but the point was that there was nothing in the system to prevent such behaviour. The abolition of the *magang* system and the 1915 regulations on appointment and promotion had improved matters, but they had not eliminated the root causes of injustice. While BB and *Pangreh Praja* were such unequal partners in power, education and responsibility, while the Regents enjoyed their anomalous privileges, there was bound to be exploitation and favouritism, arrogance and sycophancy within the native corps.

The grievances of which Soetardjo wrote had been noted by many critics of Java's administration, and were also borne out by comments in the native press, but were still dismissed out of hand by most high *priyayi* and European officials.

The BB's response to the publication of the *Grieven* was typical of their lack of sympathy with the critical younger generation of government *priyayi.* Many European officials themselves were having trouble adjusting to change in both native society and government policy. They felt that their corps was treated as the administration's 'pack-horse': overworked, undervalued, and perpetually abused; burdened with all the unpleasant work of tax collection and enforcement of government programs: snubbed and bypassed by other departments and, worst of all, betrayed and slighted by the central authorities. Batavia, they felt, pandered to nationalists and extremists while ignoring the legitimate complaints and accumulated knowledge of the BB. They feared that the European corps was in danger of being made redundant by a combination of overly Ethical politicians, ambitious but unqualified native officials and technocrats from other departments.

Most BB felt aggrieved and suspicious, tending to close ranks and deny any criticisms. When it was decided in the late 1920s to initiate regular Regents' Conferences to improve contact between *Pangreh Praja* and the Governor-General, European officials were furious, feeling that the government did not

[15] Vb. 31 December 1920, no. 6.

trust them. Indeed, in many ways the grievances of the European officials were the same as those of the government *priyayi,* but whereas the former tended to place most of the blame for their unsatisfactory lot at Batavia's door, to the *Pangreh Praja* most of the fault lay with the BB.[16] This lack of trust between corps did much to aggravate the problems inherent in the dual administrative system.

The connection between these attitudes and the fate of *ontvoogding* was a vicious circle. *Ontvoogding* would fail unless prejudices weakened, but unless something like *ontvoogding* was made to work, it was hard to see how negative assumptions could change, or how the native officials could develop their professional skills and self-confidence. As it was, *ontvoogding* petered out into insignificance, and Soetardjo was still fighting to redress the native officials' grievances in the late 1930s. The failure of the *ontvoogding* idea is not only important in itself, but also because it was typical of the fate of many liberal projects in the Indies. They were killed by the need for 'economy' or 'political realism', they were smothered in the *Beamtenstaat* ethos, or they foundered under the weight of fear and suspicion.

Social and cultural transitions of the sort experienced in Java during the early twentieth century are usually difficult, but the *Pangreh Praja* was in a particularly painful position. Its reactions were cramped and distorted by the colonial framework. Dutch theories, the desire to make continued political use of the native officials, and belief in the corps' traditional essence meant that rationalization proceeded in a halting and uneven fashion. Reforms which appeared essential and straightforward were delayed and complicated by colonial policy and also by the continuing force of Javanese tradition.

The values inherent in the *priyayi* ethic and the network of inter-personal relationships shaped reactions to both Batavia-generated developments and also to evolution in native society. While some *Pangreh Praja* men welcomed innovation, most set their faces against change and fought to defend the old ways. Similarly, within Dutch circles there were those who wanted to see native officials take the lead in new developments while others anxiously hoped that they could be used to extinguish spontaneous growth in the native community. The interaction between these viewpoints, both within and outside the native corps, forms the background to events after the first World War, when the issues of administrative reform and the relationship between government *priyayi* and the nationalist movement dominated *Pangreh Praja* development.

[16] See, among others, J.W. Meyer Ranneft, 'De verwording van het B.B. op Java', *Koloniaal Tijdschrift,* 6 (1917) pp. 145-80; J.E. Bijler, 'Het rapport over de regeling van den rechtstoestand der Indische Ambtenaren', *Koloniaal Tijdschrift,* 12 (1923) pp. 357-87.

CHAPTER 7
COLONIAL STRATEGY: OFFICIALS AGAINST NATIONALISTS, 1918-1927

There are still many unanswered questions about the groups and movements which transformed Java's public life in the early twentieth century. Little is known of the bases of their appeal, their social functions and the interaction between old and new interests. But one thing is clear: relations between the colonial regime and the common people were changing. Nineteenth century authoritarianism was no longer an adequate response to popular discontent; the sending in of officials or the army to extinguish some local *relletje* (riot) was not guaranteed to close the incident. The Ethical Policy had been proclaimed, progress and welfare were official goals, moral sensitivities were said to be more acute and besides, critical Dutch politicians and vocal Indonesian leaders refused to let such affairs die down quietly. Characteristic of this climate was the conviction that public participation in government must be increased. To some the emerging solidarities in native society offered a potential basis for a less unequal relationship between Batavia and the indigenous population.

But such attitudes could only go so far, for Java was a colony and by definition local political forces could not be allowed free play. Fundamental issues, such as who was to hold power and how resources were to be allocated, were beyond popular question. Policy was determined in the Netherlands or Batavia in accordance with Dutch interests. This was axiomatic; only the most radical 'Ethici' supported any significant loosening of the ties with Holland, and then argued that this would be to her ultimate benefit. Many officials opposed the whole Ethical trend and feared that reform had already gone too far. Opinions as to the best way to protect Dutch interests varied and attitudes towards the nationalist movement followed suit.

Politicization within the native elite disturbed the calm of the Indies *Beamtenstaat* because it forced the regime to reassess the relationship between administration and politics. The nationalists, in effect, argued that there should be a separation of the legislative and executive, that policy should be decided by chosen leaders responsible to the people rather than by Dutch bureaucrats responsible to The Hague. In a colonial situation such a revolutionary demand could not be granted, but since the Ethical policy posited native advancement, any outright denial of indigenous participation was impossible. This was the fatal flaw. Dutch officials wrestled with the problem of where to set limits on permissible native political activity. In his discussion of politics and administration within Java's *Beamtenstaat,* Benda argued that until the late nineteen-twenties liberal thought prevailed and it was only after 1927 that a hard-line policy strictly curtailed political freedom. But on closer examination it appears that the retreat from reform really began much earlier, after 1918.

During the 1920s colonial policy was shaped by the tension between the liberal desire to allow limited free play of political forces and the conservative determination to retain a European monopoly of power. On the one hand Idenburg and Van Limburg Stirum favoured a generous approach to the early nationalist movement, while on the other Simon de Graaff, essentially a bureaucrat, consistently drew up plans which gave less than they promised. Thus, although some of the major reforms of the 1918-1927 period seem liberal in conception, in practice they never escaped the closed, self-referring framework of the *Beamtenstaat.* Administrative and constitutional revisions and the introduction of Regency Councils never succeeded in freeing the political process from bureaucratic control.

Administrative and political reforms cannot be regarded separately; they were closely connected parts of an evolving colonial strategy. This strategy emerged gradually, developing from the interplay of personalities and attitudes, from immediate responses to specific situations and subsequent rationalization, and from the ever-present desire to kill as many birds with one stone as was possible. It cannot be isolated from native political activity, a major factor in stimulating change. Such activity did not force concessions from the Dutch but, as an indication of possible undesirable future trends, it led the more far-sighted policy makers to draw up contingency plans and to carry out such reforms as were considered necessary to prevent the nationalist movement from becoming a real danger.

Three main facets of this strategy can be distinguished and the native officials played an important part in each. The first and most straightforward element was repressive: the elaboration of police and courts into a more effective and comprehensive control network. For most of Java's population it was officials who maintained order, who caught and punished offenders. From Sub-District to Residency, police and courts were in the hands of BB and *Pangreh Praja.* The second dimension of the colonial strategy aimed at weakening the nationalist movement and strengthening 'traditional' leaders, loyal *priyayi,* by harassing their critics and building up a modified version of their *volkshoofd* image as paternal bureaucrats. But since the colonial authorities were aware that intimidation and traditional bonds were not enough to guarantee the amenability of the intelligentsia, they also developed political arenas within which the popular leaders could pursue their goals by acceptable means. So, as the third element, the *Volksraad* and later Regency Councils were established to provide an outlet for political pressure. They were intended to be an environment within which nationalists were subject to Dutch control and domestication. These councils will be discussed in the next chapter.

This strategy was not a centrally planned and implemented grand design, but a patterned response deriving from often unconscious assumptions and the inescapable priorities of colonial *realpolitik*. The effects of the strategists' policies were not always those intended, for they moved their pawns without under-

standing the trends they were trying to checkmate. Each tactic they employed also generated negative responses. Development of the police and colonial manipulation of *Pangreh Praja* and councils contributed to radicalization of political movements and disillusionment among progressive native officials. These tactics discredited the middle ground, and once the *Pangreh Praja* became an overt political tool of the Dutch it finally lost its credibility as leader and representative of the people. Before considering the three dimensions of colonial tactics it is essential that the political climate of the period be discussed.

The Indies Political Scene

Events during 1918 and 1919 encouraged polarization, thus strengthening the conservative case for government political intervention. Popular restlessness was marked, rice crops were poor and shipping was hamstrung by the effects of the war. The Indies Socialists, fired by the success of the Russian Revolution, organized soviets within the colonial armed forces. The *Sarekat Islam* Congress in 1918 saw left wing leaders make impressive gains, and the SI tone became much more radical. In the Netherlands the Social Democratic leader, P.J. Troelstra, called upon the people to establish a socialist government. This caused widespread nervousness in Holland and in the Indies, where Van Limburg Stirum responded by having a major statement read in the *Volksraad*, the so-called 'November declaration' or 'November promises'.

Van Limburg Stirum spoke of a new course, changing relationships, accelerating development and the need for social reform and greater prosperity. He formed a commission to advise on revision of the Indies' Constitution. The Revision Commission was established in December 1918 under the chairmanship of the distinguished lawyer J.H. Carpentier Alting, but by the time its report was ready in 1920 the political climate in the Indies had changed considerably.

Reaction to the 'November promises' ranged from horror among Indies Europeans, who saw them as gratuitous folly and an incitement to extremism, to the native leaders' optimism and sense of opportunity. But the feeling of crisis which had given birth to the promises was quickly past and the Governor General was left to reconcile the high hopes of the nationalists with the reality of a disapproving minister and hostile white opinion. Events of the following year strengthened the Dutch conviction that Van Limburg Stirum had gone much too far in his propitiation of the nationalists.[1]

Unrest in rural Java was fanned by bad harvests, and there were a number of confrontations between government agents and peasants over rice collections. In June 1919 a *Controleur* was murdered in Sulawesi and the next month there was a clash in Garut, West Java, in which troops opened fire and several people were killed. This 'Garut Affair' had wide repercussions as it led to the discovery

[1] Van der Wal, *Volksraad*, vol. 1 pp. 254-491; McVey, pp. 25-45.

of a so-called secret 'Division B' in *Sarekat Islam* which combined *santri*-led peasants and politicians. This caused great concern in Dutch and *priyayi* circles.

Like the revolt in Cilegon in 1888 and the later 1926-7 Communist rebellions, the 'Garut Affair' jarred a nerve in the colonial body politic and touched off a process of self-examination within the administration. In each case attention focused on breakdowns in communication between BB, government *priyayi* and local people. The investigation into the 'Garut Affair' concentrated on the failure of the Regent and Assistant Resident to keep in touch with the popular mood, and provoked much re-affirmation of the crucial role of the native officials.

The Regent's defence was that *Sarekat Islam* had damaged the fabric of local society, undermining the authority of *Pangreh Praja* and village heads. He maintained that SI claimed to act on behalf of the people, but really waged a terror campaign so effective that village heads were intimidated into joining SI and native officials were afraid to act against it. Since the *Bupati* was thus deprived of essential support, he was naturally unable to keep in touch with the people. While not everyone found this excuse sufficient – Hazeu in particular placed the blame squarely on the Regent – it was admitted that the overall relationship between officials and the population was unsatisfactory, and the *Bupati* was merely rebuked.[2]

Conservatives tended to reduce the issue to the corrupting influence of 'pseudo-leaders'. One BB spokesman dwelt upon the disruptive effect of such 'leaders' inserting themselves between government and people, planters and village. He dismissively described their appearance on the Indies scene, with their brown shoes, fountain pens and spectacles, as part of the 'teething troubles' of a primitive people trying to advance.[3]

But the government saw deeper causes, deriving from the *Pangreh Praja*'s position within the administration. Harking back to Snouck Hurgronje's influential article of 1908, one Dutch assessment stressed that native officials could not be effective while they were treated as 'children', 'servants' and mere 'administrative tools'. Djajadiningrat claimed that distrust of officials was common – among peasants who resented Government interference, among Muslim rural leaders, among politicians and Western-educated *priyayi* who felt the colony was being bled for the Netherlands' benefit. Like Snouck, Djajadiningrat believed that the only answer was a well-educated corps with its own clearly defined responsibilities.[4]

[2] R.C. Kwantes (ed.), *De Ontwikkeling van de nationalistische beweging in Nederlandsch-Indië: Bronnen publikatie. Eerste stuk 1917 medio 1923* (Groningen, 1975) pp. 136-197, 209-212. Colonial Archives, Vb. 11 October 1919 no. 27, 28 March 1922 E3 bis, 2 May 1923 Kab. D6; William A. Oates, 'The Afdeeling B: an Indonesian case study', *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, 9, i (1968) pp. 107-16.

[3] M.B. van der Jagt, *Memoires van M.B. van der Jagt Oud-gouverneur van Soerakarta* ('s-Gravenhage, 1955) pp. 342-8.

[4] Mr. 193^{X}/21; Djajadiningrat, *Herrinneringen*, pp. 298-302.

The 'Garut Affair' also sent its shock waves through the *Pangreh Praja,* particularly as the Division B seemed a most dangerous wedding of old hostilities to new political sentiments. How real a physical threat it was is open to question, but certainly most native officials found it very frightening indeed. Reaction varied from a desire to reject the whole popular movement to a more thoughtful appreciation of its origins. The retired Regent of Sumedang, known as Pangeran Sempurna ('the Perfect Pangeran') wrote to Van Limburg Stirum deploring the evil effect of the SI on his people: it encouraged them in rudeness and treachery, so they forgot themselves. He concluded his letter – which was in Sundanese – with a somewhat flowery but deeply felt plea: 'Oh mighty master! Commander of sincere and faithful subjects! Representative of Her Majesty Queen Wilhelmina, by the grace of God Queen of the Netherlands, with all the force that is within us we beg that you will graciously cause the *Sarekat Islam* and its leaders to vanish!'

The Regent of Cianjur, Wiranatakusuma, wrote a very different letter. Whereas Pangeran Sempurna was the epitome of the paternalistic popular chief, loved by the people and admired by the BB, Wiranatakusuma was Dutch-educated, modern and disliked by most European officials. He had had close contact with the *Sarekat Islam* since its beginnings and in his letter he explained the grounds for its success.

The *Sarekat Islam,* wrote Wiranatakusuma, met genuine needs of the people. It gave them emotional and financial support in times of crisis, such as a death in the family. It dared to defend people against village heads and to voice popular grievances. Furthermore, oaths and secrecy gave the movement great cachet. Many of these needs should have been met by the government *priyayi.* If the people trusted the *Pangreh Praja*, if they felt they could bring their troubles to officials, then much of *Sarekat Islam's* appeal would disappear. But because of their own ignorance and fear of the BB, the *Pangreh Praja* was rough and impatient and so failed to make government accessible and intelligible to the people.[5]

It was increasingly difficult for the native officials to maintain their confidence and self-respect. They were caught in the No Man's Land between hostile nationalists and suspicious Europeans. Many *priyayi* had been shaken by the rumours surrounding the Division B affair and by communist rhetoric. To them, the more extreme nationalists were not only trouble-makers, but potential murderers. Apart from this fear many native officials were aggravated by the attitude of the press.

Since before World War One the native newspapers had been outspoken critics of the government and officials, exposing their faults, commenting and judging. Their coverage was not impartial, focusing on abuses of authority – but then, the government's version of its activities was not neutral either. *Sarekat*

[5] Algemeen Rijksarchief, Van Limburg Stirum archive nos. 34 and 35 for the two letters.

Islam papers, in particular, regularly reported harassment of its members by local officials, while *Budi Utomo* and the Eurasian *Insulinde* also complained of unfair treatment. Less significant movements also received unwelcome attention. *Djowodipo,* which wanted to abolish the deferential high levels of the Javanese language, was unpopular with both BB and *Pangreh Praja* which regarded it as 'undermining authority' and dangerously democratic. One writer in the press, however, wondered why, as there was nothing unusual about encouraging the use of *ngoko* (the low Javanese used to inferiors) – after all, Regents and such used it all the time.[6]

In the initial stages of the nationalist movement, as was noted earlier, some native officials supported organizations such as SI or the *Indische Partij* but open support became increasingly rare as basic Dutch distrust of natives overcame the idea of allowing political freedom to *Pangreh Praja* officials. Occasionally there were items in the papers about victimization of government *priyayi* who were sympathetic to the nationalists. But on the whole, where there was *Pangreh Praja* involvement in politics, it was more likely to be an official co-option effort than a nationalist conversion of *priyayi.*

This was inevitable. Most BB opposed the nationalist movement and native officials were very vulnerable to their superiors' displeasure. The repercussions of the 'Garut Affair' and the impact of the 1919 'muzzling circular' – checking government employees' freedom of speech – convinced most *priyayi* that contact with critical organizations would endanger their careers. In the early twenties there were reports of native officials deserting the movement and being so intimidated that they refused to make comments on politics at all. And if these general trends were not evident enough, there were always local superiors who had no hesitation in pointing out the right path: one *Wedana,* for example, announced flatly that according to the Minister of Colonies all officials who joined SI were to be fired.[7] While the Netherlands' government would not issue such a decree, the *Wedana* was probably expressing the sentiments of many Europeans who wanted to see firm action taken against the nationalists.

After the crises of 1918 and 1919 Batavia was increasingly suspicious of the politicians, and growing militancy did nothing to allay its fears. The ISDV, the radical social democratic party known after May 1920 as the PKI (Indonesian Communist Party), had become a powerful force moving the mass *Sarekat Islam* further left until the final break between them in 1923. This collapse of the PKI's 'bloc within' did not weaken the party. On the contrary,

[6] Newspapers were summarized in the weekly *Inlandsche Pers Overzicht,* or *IPO,* see volumes for 1917-1920, particularly *IPO* 1920 no. 24 p. 2. Kwantes, passim.

[7] *IPO* 1919 no. 37 p. 1, and *IPO* passim.

it began a period of rapid, if undisciplined, expansion until by early 1924 it was the only significant popular movement in the Indies, gaining rapidly in competition with SI. It is against this background that the evolution of colonial strategy must be placed.

Police and Repression

The Dutch regime's final line of defence was physical force: the police and, for serious incidents such as rebellions, the army. Twentieth century police reforms were not simply another example of increased specialization, but were also a product of European insecurity. Predictably, the thrust of the reforms was to strengthen white control, although *priyayi* remained important in routine police work. All native officials in charge of a given territory had several *Mantri Polisi*, subordinate officials charged with police work, at their disposal. Each official also had a small group of *oppasser* or *opas* (attendants) who ran messages and performed routine security tasks such as guarding prisoners, going along on investigations, acting as watchmen and so on. Until 1897, moreover, each Regency was provided with a body of locally recruited armed men (*prajurit*, warrior) under the *Bupati's* command. But these were then disbanded and replaced by ten troups of para-military police, each with a European instructor attached. In 1912 these were reorganized into the armed police (*gewapendepolitie*), a special reserve force used to put down riot or rebellion.

The armed police were under the DIA and hence at the disposal of local BB officials but they were also part of an Indies-wide professional police network, a special division of the Department. Their officers worked with the BB but were not part of its hierarchy. The European officials, moreover, retained their own police powers and subordinate personnel, the routine General Police. Although these too were supervised by the *Procureur Generaal* (Attorney General) their day-to-day work was under the Resident's control.

The 1897 and 1912 police reorganization affected the European civil service by separating some police and administrative work, but they were not so important for the *Pangreh Praja*. Of far greater significance was the creation of the PID (*Politieke Inlichtingen Dienst*, Political Intelligence Service) in May 1916. The PID came under the *Procureur Generaal*; it had offices in Batavia and Surabaya, agents and spies throughout the Indies. It collected information on parties and individuals and assessed the political mood of the people. The PID's monthly and quarterly reports, compiled and distributed to high officials, were relied upon by both local BB and policy makers in The Hague and Batavia. By-passing native officials and relying on its own informants, the PID became a new channel linking government and people and so threatened the *Pangreh Praja's* position as Batavia's chief source of inside information on the native community. In 1920 another reorganization of the police further encroached upon the native officials' territory: the formation of the field-police (*veldpolitie*).

The field-police replaced the armed-police in an effort to improve rural security. Agrarian unrest in 1918 caused much discussion in the *Volksraad,* leading to an inquiry which criticized the armed police. They were too like an occupying army, and were distrusted by the population. The field-police were therefore set up to be both protectors of the people and a para-military force for use in major disturbances. They were career men, living in barracks, but maintaining contact with the local population by regular patrols in rural areas. Their well armed and mobile units were under the day-to-day command of European police officers but ultimate local control remained in the Residents' hands.

The creation of the field-police altered the relative power of *Pangreh Praja* and BB by weakening the former and reinforcing the latter. Just as at the centre the PID took over part of the native officials' task, so on a more parochial level the field-police provided the BB with a source of information independent of the government *priyayi.* It was difficult to draw the line between the *Pangreh Praja* general responsibility for security and the rather similar function of the field-police. Hence it is not surprising that throughout the twenties and thirties complaints about the police were common. The *Pangreh Praja* felt that there were damaging tendencies for the BB to use the police to intervene directly into local affairs and to trust them more than their Indonesian subordinates.

Djajadiningrat found himself facing a BB-police alliance when he was Regent of Serang and complained that the native officials' prestige could not survive continued slights of that kind; in reply the BB stressed the greater speed and efficiency of the police.

In the 1927 *Volksraad,* the Regents Koesoemo Oetojo, Soejono, Wiranatakusuma, Djajadiningrat and RAA Sosrodiprodjo (Regent Wonosobo after 1920) made a concerted effort to win the *Bupati* some control over the field-police on the grounds that they were driving a wedge between BB and *Pangreh Praja.*[8] But there was no chance at all of such a powerful force being placed in native hands. Although the *Pangreh Praja* was central to anti-nationalist strategy, it was expected to be passive and dependent. Besides, insofar as political antagonisms were interpreted in racial terms, the native officials were potentially unreliable. The colonial regime's distrust was particularly strong when the *priyayi* sought responsibility or participation in modern politics; Dutch officials felt much happier when their native colleagues conducted themselves as true *volkshoofden* should, by mobilizing peasant emotion in support of the status quo. During the 1920s the Priangan BB supported its *Pangreh Praja* in just such a situation.

[8] On police see A. Neytzell de Wilde, 'De Nederlandsch-Indische Politie', *Koloniaal Tijdschrift,* 13 (1924) pp. 113-180; and also his 'De Veldpolitie', *De Oud Osvianen,* 3 (1920) pp. 119-25; 'Veldpolitie en Inlandsch Bestuur', *Bestuursgids Tijdschrift van de Vereeniging 'Sedio Moelio,'* 3 (1928) pp. 4-15.

Batavia was under increased conservative pressure to 'do something' about the political situation, as the communists seemed to be gaining more and more support. Governor General Fock was slightly reluctant, but he proceeded to strengthen the laws limiting various freedoms – to speak, to assemble, to strike and so on – and also to apply them more stringently. In accordance with this repressive mood the government considered using movements within rural society to check the growth of radical politics and began listening more sympathetically to suggestions as to how this could be done.

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In Magetan the *Bupati* RAA Hadiwinoto (1912-38) had long been an opponent of the nationalist movement. In the early 1920s he decided to act against the 'cancer' being spread by 'political agitators'. He summoned the Regency *Pangreh Praja* to the *kabupaten* and lectured them on the need to combat the nationalist movement. To this end he founded his own organization, *Mardi Poerno* (Perfect Community), which was often cited by admiring BB officials as just the sort of association all Regents should establish.

Growth was at first slow: in June 1923 *Mardi Poerno* had still only thirty-seven members but then a circular brought the local government *priyayi* to an awareness of their duty and membership leapt to seven hundred, each paying seventy-five Dutch cents into the funds. *Mardi Poerno* needed capital, since the basis of its programme was economic. It invested in wet rice land (*sawah*) and livestock, establishing its own efficient farms which were then rented out to members against a return of half the produce. With financial support from the association and guidance from the *Pangreh Praja*, the *Mardi Poerno* tenants did well and this encouraged others to join.

By 1924 the association was able to maintain a small salaried staff, including a singer and a general administrator. Native officials were *Mardi Poerno*'s propagandists. It acted as a semi-official bridge between government and people with the aim of increasing both the peasants' trust in officials and their economic status, so that they were not so susceptible to agitators. The movement enjoyed great success in Magetan, providing services which perhaps the government should have been offering anyway, and it helped check nationalist expansion.[9]

Towards the end of 1924 the Attorney General was struck by this success and suggested that the government set up other 'well-disposed movements' in rural areas. He felt it would be 'practical' to establish organizations along the lines of local burial and mutual aid societies in the Priangan, involving no expense and almost no preparation.

[9] *Historische overzicht van de ontstaan en de ontwikkeling van Mardi Poerno,* (Magetan, 1924); Oates; Vb. 23 December 1925 K. 19; McVey, *Rise,* pp. 294-300; *IPO* 1925, passim.

Following the Division B affair the SI in the Priangan was largely displaced by *kiyayi*-led village associations modelled on traditional burial societies. Supported by the Sundanese *Pangreh Praja*, they also often had loose links with the conservative associationist *Politiek Economische Bond* or PEB[10] and they were well established by 1921. The Attorney General's choice of such organizations was partly because they offered a ready-made structure within which the villagers could be 'protected' from indoctrination by the growing network of rural PKI groups, and partly because it was recognized that much support for political movements came because they provided help in the form of funeral benefits and so on.

Early in 1924 the Priangan BB, headed by Resident A.J.H. Eyken (1921-5), began a campaign against political parties. Towards the end of the year efforts were increased until in Sumedang, by early 1925, there were about twenty thousand members of the 'counter-movement' concentrated in and around the Regency capital. The various groups – often called *Sarekat Hijau* (Green Association) – based their appeal on Islam, on loyalty to the old chiefs (notably the Regents) and on what was called 'the real native ethic'.

The Attorney General, the Governor General, BB and *Pangreh Praja* were all intimately involved in this campaign, although private correspondence claiming credit alternated with public disclaimers of any connection with the spontaneous popular movement. Also involved were the PEB, the police – including both village and field-police – and conservative *kiyayi*. All observers agreed that there had been an upsurge of local organizations with varying Islamic and mutual help purposes and that tension between these groups and both PKI and SI was extremely high, but accounts as to how and why these organizations had developed so rapidly and opinions of their actions diverged sharply.

There was a series of ugly incidents in Priangan in early 1925, most involving the police as the main source of violence. According to the PKI their groups were subjected to a campaign of terror by police and hired thugs directed by the local *Pangreh Praja* and masterminded by the capitalist government. Allowing for ideological colouring, this was largely true. The government had decided to keep the village heads out of the counter-movements to allow other local leaders to participate. This meant in effect the rural *kiyayi*, and seems to have also encouraged local anti-authority (and frequently criminal) figures to play a prominent part in the disturbances. These men, characterized by their willingness to use violence and known as *buaya darat* (land crocodiles), were part of a traditional *jago*-like counter-culture. Nationalist papers claimed that the *buaya darat* were recruited, paid and organized by local native officials; while this is not proved in the Dutch documents, it would be quite in keeping with *priyayi* methods.

[10] Sutherland, 'Pangreh Pradja', pp. 370-1 discusses links between PEB and *priyayi*.

In Tasikmalaya, where the *Bupati* had close ties with religious leaders, the *kiyayi* were the PKI's main opponents. The Ciamis and Bandung Regents were also very active and the role of the latter in particular merits discussion. RAA Wiranatakusuma was prominent in Bandung and Batavia public life and had been involved with the nationalist movement since the beginning. His early good relations with *Sarekat Islam* had cooled as the SI grew more critical; after the 'Garut Affair' in particular he became very wary. But he remained very active in religious affairs, studying with local *kiyayi* and publishing books on Islam. In 1924 he made the pilgrimage to Mekka, returning as a well-publicized *Haji*. He was also a leader of regional movements: patron of the Bandung *Pasundan* and leader of the *Wargi Bandung* (Bandung Membership), a local aristocratic movement which included a high proportion of native officials. Formed to fight the 'communist terror', *Wargi Bandung* was later opened to all like-minded *priyayi*.

Since he had had a good Dutch education, it was easy for Wiranatakusuma to move in European circles: he was an NIVB representative in the *Volksraad* and a Freemason. He was also very popular with the people of Bandung; he was said to have the gift of healing and to make ordinary water into potent medicine. Even his many marriages and reputed fondness for women, disapproved of by the more puritanical nationalists and Europeans alike, seemed to the people of his *kabupaten* a suitable attribute for a Sundanese Regent. And in fact Wiranatakusuma fitted the image: he was a good Muslim while bearing his religion easily and not letting it interfere with his enjoyment of the good things of life; he was a patron of local culture and a provider of social spectacles.[11]

Both his political interests and ability to please the people were fully exercised in early 1925. He addressed a series of meetings in Bandung villages, talking to two to three thousand people at a time, explaining that God decided man's lot, that equality was an impossibility and that if the government was changed foreigners would come, so the people must forgive each other and live as brothers. He was received with full *hormat*, his speeches punctuated by short mass affirmations of obedience and agreement (*dawuh Gusti!*) and at the end the people would surge forward to kiss his hands and feet. Such meetings combined political rally with religious revival. They were also characterized by conversions: hundreds of PKI sympathizers would renounce their past and affirm their loyalty to Regent and government. Resident Eyken noted with satisfaction that the *Bupati* of Bandung, Ciamis and Tasikmalaya had succeeded in renewing the old *volkshoofd* contact between Regent and people.

But the role of the Priangan Regents was not simply that of Resident Eyken's puppets; they had a considerable personal interest in checking the nationalist movement. Priangan *Bupati* had enjoyed greater powers longer than

[11] Wiranatakusuma, *Mijn Reis naar Mekka*; MvO P.R.W. Gesseler Verschuir mr. 648[X]/30 pp. 22-8; interviews, Java 1969-1970.

had Regents elsewhere in Java; they retained their rights to appoint subordinate *priyayi* and levy taxes well into the late nineteenth century while their extra income from the government coffee production enabled them to maintain a traditionally lavish life style. Within Sundanese society they were still the focus of popular reverence and, with their families, kin and subordinates, constituted the governing aristocracy, the *menak*. Unlike their colleagues elsewhere they seemed to retain the confident authority of a secure ruling class. And so when their position was questioned, when SI and PKI began to mobilize popular hostility against the status quo, the Sundanese *Bupati* reacted strongly.

They reacted against the PKI and also against *Sarekat Islam*'s criticisms of established religious custom. In particular the Regents resented the charge that it was heterodox to cite the *Bupati* in the Friday sermon. For all their tolerance the Sundanese were devout Muslims, at least by central Javanese standards, and their *Bupati* were supported by local *kiyayi*. The campaign against the use of the Regents' name by the SI (particularly Haji Agus Salim) and PKI at rallies held in Priangan in 1923 and 1924 threatened the *Bupati*'s link with Islam. In the heightened atmosphere of early 1925 this led to violence, notably in Cianjur where a SI leader was first interrogated by local *kiyayi*, then attacked by a mob, while his associates were cross-examined and beaten by police. The Regent held an inquiry and reaffirmed his support for the *kiyayi* but sporadic violence continued.

Batavia was not completely happy with the way things were going in Priangan. The DIA Director (1924-5) and Governor-designate of the new Province of West Java, W.P. Hillen, had been rather dubious all along. He recognized the virtues of *Mardi Poerno* and aid associations in Sumedang but thought it inadvisable to attempt a mass transplanting of such movements. He feared that they would dangerously weaken the village administration and unleash local antagonisms, for no one could guarantee the behaviour of the leaders. Although Resident Eyken was delighted and praised the police for 'forcefully' upholding authority, the Governor General himself doubted that the officials were in control.

The local BB and *priyayi* maintained that although public feeling was strong it was quite under their control. But their power to bridle village emotions was limited. Lower native officials, at least, exceeded their brief in their anxiety to prove effective and, perhaps, to make the most of a sanctioned opportunity to purge 'trouble-makers' and pay off old scores. The result was uncontrolled excess. But in any case, for the short term at least, the officially initiated intimidation campaign had succeeded – at some cost – in checking PKI and SI expansion.

By March 1925 the disturbances were dying down. The PKI ascribed this in part to the formation of their own defensive vigilante group. But by this stage too, both Resident and Assistant Resident were stressing the need for officials and field-police to maintain order and do their utmost to calm the

people. Although it was never admitted that events had got out of hand, a distinct shift in tone occurred between the January and March BB reports – from triumph to moderation – which suggests that the strength of popular feeling and the ensuing rioting had alarmed the officials.[12]

These developments in Priangan are an illuminating example of official manipulation of local tensions. This was not, of course, restricted to Priangan; there were similar situations about the same time in Cirebon, Bogor, Kediri, Ngawi and Jepara. Nor was it an isolated phenomenon of the early twenties; it was completely in the tradition of *priyayi* faction politics and it no doubt remained very common for interventionist European or native officials to mobilize client networks against undesirables. On the village level the anti-PKI campaign was not so very far removed from earlier power struggles such as, for example, the 'Brotodiningrat Affair.'[13] But in Priangan rioting was particularly widespread and intense; the SI and PKI clashed with an unusual alliance of Regents and Islam, and the combination proved explosive. Consequently the ensuing events and their background are unusually well documented.

From the point of view of government and officials the main cause of trouble was the attack on their authority. Since they could not, as officials, respond too violently themselves, they arranged that the loyal and outraged peasantry should be encouraged to act. This was only semi-secret – it was sometimes denied, sometimes acknowledged. What was not admitted, although frequently stated in the native press, was that the government had been under considerable pressure from the PEB to act firmly and the PEB itself had had a hand in some of the early movements – certainly the nationalists believed so. As a conservative associationist party the PEB saw the *Bupati* as its natural allies; it relied on Regent support in the *Volksraad* and in return defended *Bupati* perquisites against liberal criticism. Many BB officials also supported the PEB.

On the local level the police were the strong arm of the administration. Even the Resident admitted that the village police were sometimes uncontrollable; the field-police proved easier to call off. The native officials' performance was similarly entangled in local emotions: the BB noted that they did good work, while the press accused them of unleashing thugs on to innocent people – they probably did both. For the Regents also there were probably two facets to their campaign: the well publicized *volkshoofd* mass meetings and semi-secret support for sometimes violent local movements. All told, the incidents provide

[12] Mr. 196^{x}/25; 216^{x}/25; Vb. 23 December 1925 K. 18; *IPO* passim.

[13] Onghokham discusses the famous conflict between the Madiun Regent Brotodiningrat (1885-1900) and his Resident J.J. Donner in some detail; the case illuminates *priyayi* networks even if the Resident's account sometimes verges on paranoia. See his essay 'The inscrutable and the paranoid. An investigation into the sources of the Brotodiningrat affair', in R.T. McVey (ed.), *Southeast Asian Transitions: approaches through local history*, (New Haven, in press).

a useful reminder not only of the role of the officials as an active political force, but also of the dangers involved in deliberately stirring the wasps' nest of rural rivalries.

On the whole, the unrest could be contained by the joint efforts of officials and police. Village disturbances did not unduly worry Batavia, who felt a firm hand and removal of outside agitators would soon restore *rust en orde*. Intellectual and *priyayi* opposition was more serious and demanded not only judicious suppression, but also the provision of approved alternative arenas for healthy political activity.

CHAPTER 8
VOLKSRAAD AND COUNCILS: CONTROLLED POLITICAL OUTLETS

The emergence of the so-called native movement in the years before World War One had decided the relatively flexible colonial authorities of the time to allow Indonesians some voice in policy debates. The institutions for this participation were, for the Indies as a whole the *Volksraad* (Peoples Council), and in Java first the Residency and later the Regency Councils.

The first *Volksraad* (1918-21) had 38 members; half were elected by Municipal and Residency councils, half were nominated by the Governor General. Ten of the fifteen natives were elected, including all the largest contingent of five from the NIVB. The right of nomination was used to seat 'extreme' representatives of the *Nationale Indische Partij* and *Sarekat Islam*, as well as three more independents. Four Regents were members – Koesoemo Oetojo, Djajadiningrat, Koesoemo Joedo and Soejono. These *Bupati* were the only *Pangreh Praja* members in the first *Volksraad*, and as such were regarded as representing the native officials.

There was some non-Regent *Pangreh Praja* participation in later councils, particularly after the formation of major associations in the late 1920s. In addition to Regents these movements were also represented by officials of lower rank, notably the *Patih* Soetardjo Kartohadikoesoemo, Prawoto Soemodilogo and Wiradiatmadja and the *Wedana* Hermen Kartowisastro. Another *Wedana*, R. Sadjiroen, represented the PEB between 1921 and 1924. But the Regents dominated the *Volksraad* as 'moderate' native spokesmen. A number of *Bupati* served very long terms, notably Wiranatakusuma and the original four Regent members. Another sixteen Regents, many of whom were conservative PEB supporters, served for shorter periods. As far as the *Pangreh Praja* was concerned, the *Volksraad* was disproportionately the preserve of the *Bupati*, the overwhelming majority of whom were elected.

For the government the Regents' presence in the *Volksraad* had both advantages (mainly political) and disadvantages (mainly administrative). Council attendance entailed spending at least four months per year in Batavia, and some felt this decreased the Regents' administrative effectiveness. But for political reasons the *Bupati* were kept as members. The colonial authorities valued them as spokesmen for the indigenous population and they seldom said anything to upset the Dutch. Their 'loyalty' could be relied upon since they identified their own interests with the regime. They were the most modern *Bupati* but they were generally very anti-nationalist, although the most progressive did agree with some limited political demands. Many suspected that the government still regarded them as 'natives' and hence untrustworthy, and since they were dependent on the Dutch they were careful to give no cause for doubt.[1]

[1] Sutherland, 'Pangreh Praja', pp. 297-300.

The Regents' political freedom was very limited and the *Volksraad* itself fell short of expectations. In 1916 a Dutchman, writing in Malay for *priyayi*, stressed the connection between the creation of the *Volksraad* and Ethical concepts of equality. He pointed out that the local councils, the *Volksraad's* future electorate, were dominated by government employees, and that this had to change. If the *Volksraad* was controlled by officials it would fail.[2] But in fact such changes never occurred.

The number of council members who comprised the electorate was very small: in Java in 1924, for example, they numbered less than 700, of whom only 169 were natives. Since about 70 of these were Regents, and a high proportion of the remainder *Pangreh Praja*, the official grip on the native electoral process was strong. Within the *Volksraad* the native members were mostly either officials or the most moderate nationalists. In the second, third and fourth Councils (1921-1931) the dominant party among the Indonesians was the PEB, while in the fifth *Volksraad* (1931-5) the native officials' association was the largest faction.[3] These mild groups did not represent the vocal Indonesian radicals, whose paths diverged from the government-provided channels, and who were increasingly convinced Batavia would never make real concessions to the native movement. This conviction gained force from the fate of the Carpentier Alting Constitutional Revision Commission.

The Commission had been conceived in the excitement of November 1918, when radical reform seemed necessary to prevent revolution. But during its deliberations steps were taken to ensure that there were no more such crises. In 1919 restrictions were placed on the right of assembly, while the political freedom of officials was sharply curtailed in the same year. The replacement of Idenburg as Minister of Colonies by Simon de Graaff, also in 1919, strengthened the conservatives, although Van Limburg Stirum remained Governor General until 1921. When he was replaced, however, it was by the cautious D. Fock (1921-6) who presided over a general slowing down of political development.[4]

A new bill was also passed in 1919 which formally divided the population into three legal and administrative racial groups – European, Foreign Asiatic and natives.[5] In practice this had always been the basis for most institutions but nevertheless its legal establishment at that time was significant. The bill underlined the decline of associationist ideas and a growing trend towards

[2] J.J. Schrieke, 'Koloniale Raad: apa boeahnja sidang?' and 'Koloniale Raad: oentoek anak Hindia?', *Pedoman Prijaji*, 1, (1916) pp. 42-51, 65-76.

[3] Visman report, no. 1, pp. 81-96, 138-41.

[4] McVey, pp. 108-10, 399 notes 48, 49; Van der Wal, *Opkomst* pp. 508-27; J.Th.P. Blumberger, *De Communistische Beweging in Nederlandsch-Indie* 2nd ed., (Haarlem, 1935) pp. 168-209.

[5] Van Neil, p. 205.

communal solidarity and racial separation. This reflected the changing social composition and political sense of identity of the Indies' major communities; during the 1930s these new realities shaped both Dutch policy and nationalist tactics.

The report of the Revision Commission, published in mid-1920, was completely at odds with these trends. The Commission recommended radical opening-up of the political structure, limitation of Netherlands interference, wider powers and new electoral procedures for the *Volksraad.* This more representative Council would gain the right to nominate members of the Council of the Indies, and so expand popular access to the Governor General. Two proposals in particular expressed the spirit of the Commission's report and attracted heavy criticism: it was suggested that the 'Netherlands' be dropped from 'Netherlands India', and it was urged that race cease to be a criterion in the colony's political, administrative, and legal life. This last included the abolition of the dual administrative hierarchy, by unifying *Pangreh Praja* and BB. The whole thrust of the report was towards an autonomous 'India'.

Commission members were far from unanimous and there was a plethora of dissenting memoranda. D.M.G. Koch, himself a member, divided the Commission into three groups. These were, firstly, the colonial reactionaries, including the later Minister of Colonies Ch.J.I.M. Welter; secondly, a large middle group who wanted some improvements but no radical changes; and finally, a small group on the left: Koch himself, his fellow socialist Ch.G. Cremer, Hasan Djajadiningrat and the nationalist Haji Agus Salim. Most of the remaining Javanese members, including three high native officials, belonged to the centre.[6]

Minister de Graaff and the overwhelming majority of Dutchmen found the report quite unacceptable, although several approved Welter's rightwing minority opinion. Most felt democracy was suicidally out of touch with Indies reality. Some thoughtful critics felt that the Commission's ideals were admirable, but it had little grasp of political priorities. The Director of the Education Department, for example, argued that the report was based on a false premise since harmony between government and people was impossible in a colony where there was 'natural' antagonism between the alien rulers and the ruled. This rather hard realism was foreign to the optimistic humanism of the Revision Commission's report, which belonged to the hopeful days of Ethicism and association rather than to the grimmer post-1918 political climate.[7]

[6] D.M.G. Koch, *Verantwoording: een Halve Eeuw in Indonesie,* ('s-Gravenhage/Bandung, 1956) pp. 116-23; Van der Wal, *Volksraad,* Vol. I, pp. 356-491; Brouwer pp. 87-90; and the Commission's *Verslag van de Commissie tot Herziening van de Staatsinrichting van Nederlandsch-Indie,* (Weltevreden, 1920).

[7] Van der Wal, *Volksraad,* Vol. I, pp. 356-491; Brouwer, 87-9.

It was clear that the report would not be implemented and, indeed, it was largely ignored by De Graaff who was busy developing his own blueprints for the Indies. These were eventually accepted as the constitutional revision law and the administrative reform law. The first resulted in the replacement of the 1854 Regulation with the 1925 *Indische Staatsregeling* (Indies Constitution), while the second laid the basis for the administrative reforms of 1922-5. Since the former was political and the latter administrative, they would seem to be separate; but in Java, still very much the *Beamtenstaat*, this was not the case. As a later official report observed: 'the political organization would come into being within the framework of the administrative organization and would derive support from it'.[8]

The constitutional revision law re-defined the relationship between the Indies and the Netherlands, and affected only Batavia. On the local level, however, the administrative reform law had more effect with its creation of Regency Councils and restriction of BB activity. But by its exclusion of meaningful native participation the constitutional revision law wounded some Indonesians, in particular those who believed that by virtue of loyalty, education and rank they were entitled to consideration. These leaders, including the more westernized Regents, resented the restricted scope allowed them. But government reaction to their aspirations was indicative of Batavia's view of the native official's role. During the 1920s political manipulation of the *Pangreh Praja* by colonial officials became increasingly obvious. Such manipulation encompassed both covert intervention in local politics (as in the Priangan villages) and the reshaping of political institutions to ensure their obedience. In the following pages this use of political forms will be traced, first in connection with the constitutional revision law, and then in the organization of Regency Councils and administrative reform.

The constitutional revision law ignored the central thrust of the Commission's report. No effort was made to introduce genuinely collegiate decision-making, power-sharing or even limited popular influence on policy. Real power remained in the Governor General's hands. The law fell short of the Commission's far-reaching proposals, and those who had hailed the report as a major breakthrough were extremely dissatisfied. Several groups organized to fight a rear-guard action against De Graaff's law. In the Netherlands, famous Leiden men came together in the Oppenheim Committee, while in Java a Committee for the Autonomy of Netherlands India was founded in December 1921. From our point of view the latter is the more important.

The inaugural meeting of the Autonomy Committee was held in the Bandung *kabupaten*, as *Bupati* Wiranatakusuma was a member. Djajadiningrat was President and Koesoemo Oetojo was also involved. They argued that the

[8] Visman report, no. 1, p. 135. Also, Ph. Kleintjes, 'Het aanhangige wetsontwerp tot herziening van het regeeringsreglement van Indië', *Indisch Genootschap*, (1924) pp. 143-65.

Revision Commission had expressed the Indies' aspirations and the government's indifference to this was a 'deep disappointment'. They called for real autonomy and proposed sending a delegation to the Netherlands to plead their cause. Although their aims were both legal and moderate, majority opinion had become so hostile towards 'Ethicism' that there was much wild writing in the press about communist backing and revolutionary intentions. In particular, the Regents' participation was seen as most ominous, as they were meant to be the bulwark against 'extremism'.

Government displeasure was quickly made known. Within twelve days the Resident of Semarang reported that Koesoemo Oetojo had decided to withdraw from the Committee, since he understood that his position as *Bupati* was incompatible with such a movement. But charges of intimidation were indignantly refuted: the Governor General personally stated that absolutely *no pressure* at all was used – the Resident had merely explained the situation and asked the Regent to make up his own mind.

This was probably true. But over the years BB and *Pangreh Praja* had evolved a system of suggestion, and the *perintah alus* (soft command) was a recognized institution. Since a highly developed sensitivity to a superior's unspoken preferences was an asset all *priyayi* strove to develop, the Regents were no doubt well aware of the government attitude. There was a flurry of informal meetings between the *Bupati* and their Residents, who showed unusual concern in helping the Regents cope with their freedom of choice.

In fact pressure was obvious. Djajadiningrat, perhaps choosing to ignore the conventions, wrote to the Resident of Banten that he also would withdraw 'since the Government has serious objections to my participating in the Committee for the Autonomy of Netherlands India on the grounds that I am an official.' But he apparently misunderstood: the Governor General said that this was 'quite false' and that all he and the BB had done was clarify the situation. The Committee discussed its plans with high officials, but to no avail. The government kept repeating that, within reasonable limits, there was political freedom, but it also kept vetoing the Committee's proposals. The net effect of the whole affair was that the native officials received the definite impression that Batavia did not welcome political involvement.

The situation was ambiguous, with the government expressing support for one principle while applying another. This became obvious when Wiranatakusuma, president of the OOB, wrote to the Adviser R. Kern to ask what the government's attitude would be to any connection between the OOB and the autonomy movement.

Kern wrote to the Governor General reminding him of recent *Volksraad* debates in which Koesoemo Joedo had asked for the government's attitude to *Pangreh Praja* members joining political movements. The official spokesman had replied that native officials as individuals enjoyed freedom of conviction but as officials they should hold themselves above partisan activities. But when

asked if there were objections to membership in the PEB he said native officials could join 'order-loving political parties'. The implication was plain: political involvement was acceptable only if it was in pro-government parties. Since the Autonomy movement dared to be critical, even if moderate, Wiranatakusuma's inquiry met a very cool reception.[9]

The colonial authorities were then only in favour of native officials' involvement in approved political parties. This proved government willingness to allow natives a voice, but did not risk challenge or harsh comment. In the *Volksraad* there was also no real political freedom for native officials; as *volkshoofden* they were expected to be loyal spokesmen for their people, not critics of the regime. Similarly, on the more local level, *ontvoogding* seemed to signify Batavia's desire to allow the native corps more scope, while strengthening the anti-nationalist front and saving money. But in all cases government credibility and effectiveness were damaged by its refusal to give the native officials any real responsibility. This refusal made a mockery of any claims to equality between the Indonesian elite and Europeans – in Dutch eyes the *priyayi* should be pro-colonial political instruments.

Yet according to the theory behind the early 1920s' constitutional revision law and the administrative reform law, the Indies were to move away from the *Beamtenstaat* towards a more autonomous polity with increasing popular involvement in government. For the rural and small town population of Java, the key institution in this transition was to be the Regency Council. These Councils offered one more chance that *priyayi* might find a constructive role for themselves.

The creation of local councils had been basic to decentralization projects since the late nineteenth century. But whereas some planners held that part of the government's power must be transferred to bodies drawn from the people and responsible to them, others believed that it was better to shift administrative work from the centre to officials (or bodies under the control of officials) who were appointed by, and responsibile to, the government. The former were more likely to recommend the centre's retention of certain powers while transferring general authority; the latter stressed administrative decentralization by the delegation of specific powers. In the reality of *ontvoogding*, and the handling of the Revision Commission, the latter triumphed. The question was whether the proposed Regency Councils would suffer the same fate.

In 1914 Simon de Graaff had drafted plans for the councils in which they were essentially bureaucratic conveniences. More liberal proposals, influenced by Snouck Hurgronje, came from Minister Th.B. Pleijte (1913-18) who suggested that all-elected advisory councils be established in suitably advanced Regencies. Officials and village heads would be excluded so that although the councils'

[9] Vb. 12 January 1922 Lt. O; mr. 1922^{X}/161; *IPO*, 1922 passim; Van der Wal, *Volksraad*, Vol. I, pp. 505-10.

powers would be limited, they would nevertheless be linked directly to the people and removed from the administrative ethos. Like the Revision Commission, Pleijte wanted popular councils adapted from Dutch models. Idenburg, Pleijte's successor as Minister, agreed with him but already another view of the councils was gaining ground.

During 1918 and early 1919 a considerable effort was made to collect the opinions of both central and regional officials, and of the general public. An unusual, even radical, step was the dispatching of three officials on a lengthy tour of Java to explain the proposals and gauge public reaction. They addressed both political and administrative meetings and made an unprecedented effort to contact ordinary people, often using Malay so that non-Dutch speakers could participate. There was extensive coverage in the native press. On the whole reaction was favourable, although there were cynics who felt the councils would be a hollow sham, BB officials who believed they would be both superfluous and disruptive, and political leaders who denounced them as another capitalist tactic. But, generally speaking, public interest was surprisingly strong. The idea of semi-autonomous racially mixed councils, part appointed, part indirectly elected, attracted increasing support. The government concurred but felt Regents must preside, although in this they disagreed with those who would have preferred to see the Assistant Resident as council president.

Idenburg was convinced that the Regencies could become the basis of a new political structure. Towards the end of 1918 he had written to Governor General van Limburg Stirum that 'authority is destined to evolve from Regency to Province . . . our final goal is the conversion of Provinces from agencies of the Netherlands to organs of autochthanous authority'. But then in November 1919 Idenburg was replaced as Minister by De Graaff, who had not abandoned his own conception of the councils. In May 1920 he announced that the Pleijte proposal was withdrawn and in September he submitted his own draft. This was approved by the Dutch parliament in February 1922 and became law the same year, although it was not to come into force until 1925.[10] What De Graaff did in effect was to invert Idenburg's hopes; authority was to devolve from Provinces to Regencies and the colonial regime was to remain in total control.

The new reform law provided the basis for the 'autonomous' Provinces and Regencies of Java. Provinces were finally created in West Java in 1926, East Java in 1929 and Central Java in 1930. The Regencies with their Councils, which replaced the Residency Councils, were also established over a period of years beginning in 1925.

[10] On reform and councils see Van der Wal, *Volksraad*, Vol. I, pp. 148-61; Chr.P. Wijngaarden, 'De uitvoering der bestuurshervorming van 1922', *Indisch Genootschap*, (1924) and 'Regentschap en Provincie', *Indisch Genootschap*, (1921); P.A. Achmad Djajadiningrat, 'De instelling van Regentschapsraden op Java en Madoera', *Koloniale Studien*, 3, ii (1919) pp. 359-92; Vb. 8 October 1918 no. 41; Vb. 27 May 1919 no. 55, and the official reports *Aantekeningen over de instelling van Regentschapsraden op Java en Madoera*, (Batavia, 1918); *Verslagen Betreffende het Onderzoek in Zake de Instelling van Regentschapsraden op Java en Madoera*, (Weltevreden, 1919); *IPO*, 1919-1925, passim.

According to the Regency Ordinance, Regencies were administered by a Council, a College of Delegates (a small group of selected Council members who handled day-to-day administration) and the *Bupati*. Members served four years on the Council, which was part appointed (including European, Foreign Asiatic and a couple of native members), while the remainder were elected indirectly. On the average, the electorate comprised between one fifth and one sixth of the native population. In practice most elected members were native officials. During meetings the Regent took the chair, and general affairs were discussed and decided; budget, roads, markets, irrigation and so on. The languages of debate were Dutch, Malay or the local vernacular.

The creation of the Councils turned out to be a less radical step than many had hoped or feared. Those who had condemned it as an irresponsible admission of an immature people to a share in government processes which they were incapable of understanding were forced to admit that the Councils had not become hot-beds of extremism. On the other hand, those who had hoped to see a genuine connection of local government with the people by the admission of popular leaders to the Councils were finally disappointed. But despite their compromise nature the Councils remained controversial, the subject of sporadic reassessment until the end of the colonial period.

Discussion focused on several major issues: whether the very idea of such Councils was a fundamental misreading of Indonesian political interests and abilities, and whether they were, in fact, doing more harm than good. On the highest level of generalization, emphasizing the differences between 'East' and 'West', the primary question was whether or not the Councils, products of an alien Western democratic tradition, could possibly succeed in Javanese society.

This was closely related to the popular view of Javanese political life as 'organic', based on a closed village community once described as 'the Palladium of Peace'. Within this milieu the Regency Councils could be a jarring foreign import designed to satisfy the aspirations of a small group of intellectuals who were themselves a peripheral political aberration. Others, in favour of the Councils but anxious to relate them to local traditions, stressed their compatibility with the 'essentially democratic' village community with its collective decision making. There were those, in fact, who argued that village councils would have been more viable, although others replied that Regencies had been political units for hundreds of years.

Pro-Council Dutch officials with a philosophical bent, such as the influential A.D.A. de Kat Angelino, naturally emphasized the harmonious interlocking of Regency Councils and local traditions, while anti-Council spokesmen focused on their presumed disruptive influence.[11] Indeed, at this level of abstraction, theories as to the nature of the indigenous polity were used to support individual convictions; ultimately, nothing could be proved. On a less

[11] De Kat Angelino, *Staatkundig beleid* Vol. III. pp. 433-41.

elevated plane, considering rather more demonstrable realities, attitudes to the Councils derived from assessment of native trustworthiness and abilities, and from the influence of the Councils on popular political opinion.

The relationship between Regents and assemblies was central to the Councils' political impact. Some said that the *Bupati* were crippling the Councils, others claimed exactly the opposite. It was acknowledged that it was asking a great deal to expect a Regent to descend from his authoritarian eminence and become a *primus inter pares* in the Council, subject to questioning and disagreement. If the assembly overruled his objections and out-voted him, as an official the *Bupati* was nevertheless obliged to carry out a policy he was known to oppose. Even optimistic reckoning found less than a third of the Regents equipped for their new task. Despite this in 1932 a group of *Bupati* spokesmen concluded that the Councils' advantages outweighed their disadvantages. Although their position as Chairmen was 'precarious' *Bupati* did have more scope for independent action and so the most able found the Councils expanded their powers.

Indeed, confrontations between nationalists and Regents were unlikely in the Councils, as they were firmly under the administration's control. Most members were officials and there was little radical influence, which disappointed many politically aware Indonesians. They felt that the Councils, which had excited so much enthusiasm in 1918 and 1919, in practice were mere extensions of the bureaucracy and were, moreover, ignored whenever they might disagree with the government. According to a *Sarekat Islam* spokesman, the councils were like gramophones: only listened to when the desired record was played. One critic concluded that the Councils were 'just pretend' (*poera-poera raden*), which is surprisingly close to Simon de Graaff's comment that they were a mere 'Government gazette product' (*Staatsblad maaksel*) – a somewhat unexpected statement from their chief architect.[12]

De Graaff's comment on the Councils reflected Batavia's attitude, which saw the assemblies as a key element in colonial strategy. It was admitted that they were hollow, official-dominated bodies, but they were important because of what they would become. They were 'for the future', a training ground for the domestication of political development. It was on this basis that De Graaff made his apparently dismissive remark about 'Government gazette products'; he followed it with the slightly smug statement that 'we must always be one step ahead of history'.[13]

[12] On regents' reactions see mr. $883^{X}/32$; in general Vb. 19 October 1920 no. 14; and for criticisms see H. Colijn, *Koloniale Vraagstukken van Heden en Morgen* (Amsterdam, 1928) pp. 85-7; anon., 'De bestuurshervorming', *Timboel*, 2, (1928) pp. 345-7; and in its defence see Achmad Djajadiningrat, 'De positie van de Regenten op Java en Madoera in het huidige bestuursstelsel', *Indisch Genootschap*, (1929) pp. 90-5.

[13] Vb. 4 April 1938 no. $0^{11}/85$; part is reprinted in Van der Wal, *Volksraad*, Vol. II, pp. 459-60, notes.

To those more interested in the present than the future the Regency Councils were a disappointment. The common people were uninterested and regarded them as just another troublesome government agency interfering in village affairs, extracting taxes and labor. Conservative BB officials and the Dutch language press regularly accused them of mismanaging funds and failing to meet their responsibilities, while charging the Regents with corruption, nepotism and a whole range of shortcomings which were held to be inherent in the 'native character'. More objective critics pointed out that abuses were no worse than before, and that *Bupati* were handicapped by inadequate funds and inexperienced secretarial staff while most Council members pushed their work on to the overburdened Regent. Nationalists made their own disillusionment quite plain, particularly after the development of 'non-co-operation' led the more militant majority to boycott all Councils.

Although they were limited, the Councils did provide contact between Regents, other officials and private individuals from all communities. In theory, this contact was outside the hierarchy of the administrative corps. Ideally the Councils were democratic, with free exchanges of opinion. Given the realities of Javanese society, of relationships between ranks within the *Pangreh Praja*, between native and European officials, and between the administration and the population, it was inevitable that the ideal was seldom reached. More usual patterns of Regent behaviour in the Councils were those of the old-fashioned authoritarian, or of the passive, probably bored and bewildered bystander, or of the benevolent dictator enforcing progress. However, the Councils were new, and perhaps could ultimately have provided a framework for political development. In actuality, their impact was limited: they had a fairly important role in local administration, and were a major element in the *Volksraad* electorate, but apart from that they seem to have been of interest to their members alone.

Nevertheless, the Regency Councils, like their counterparts in the Provinces, provided valuable experience. Many middle *priyayi* as well as *Bupati* were elected or appointed, and were involved in a wide range of business – an informal political education. It was education with a strong pro-government bias. The dominant role of the *Bupati* in Regency Councils and the Governor in the Provinces merely underlined the assemblies' subordination to the administration. When J.S. Furnivall visited the chamber of one of Java's Provincial Councils he was impressed by the imposing hall, equipped as a miniature parliament. He was struck, too, by the contrast between the grand setting and the Council's actual powers, which were closer to those of an Indian Local Board than to those of the theoretical parallel of an Indian Provincial Assembly.[14]

In May 1927 the native officials assembled in Batavia for a conference. During the decade since the Regents' Association 1917 gathering, there had been great changes in Java's society and administration. At first glance the record

[14] J.S. Furnivall, *Netherlands India: a study of plural economy* (Cambridge, 1944) pp. 286-9.

seems a chronicle of progress, but on closer examination it emerges as a series of bitter lessons for the progressive minority of government *priyayi. Volksraad* and Regency Councils, *ontvoogding* and education reform, none had allowed either the native movement or the *Pangreh Praja* to find their feet within Indies political life. The officials had been forced into uncritical support for the regime, or at least into tactful neutrality. The result was that the 1927 conference was a docile affair, apparently concerned with administrative business pure and simple. But under the surface a new mood was emerging of frustration and growing hostility towards the BB officials.

The Conference, initiated by the Regents' Association, was dominated by the *Bupati* Djajadiningrat, Koesoemo Oetojo, Soejono, Wiranatakusuma, and Koesoemo Joedo. In this it was the same as the pioneering one ten years before; but this time Djajadiningrat was in the chair, and the focus was not on politics – which was never mentioned – but on the work of the native corps. There were in fact two topics: the village and the future role of the *Pangreh Praja.* Discussion of the village revolved around the need to democratize village institutions, notably by the creation of councils and the replacement of the *perentah alus* by consultation. But the debate on the future of the government *priyayi* touched the participants more closely, and their speeches were revealing.

Koesoemo Joedo was the first to speak, which he did with vague optimism from a basically conservative standpoint. The *Bupati* were *volkshoofden,* and must remain so; *ontvoogding* and Regency Councils would help preserve their position. Several later speakers took exception to this implicit assumption that the Councils should exist to buttress the *Bupati,* but on the whole his attitudes were unexceptional examples of insular Regent opinion.

The next speaker, Wiranatakusuma, was far more forthright. The native officials, he said, were becoming less *volkshoofden* and more administrative tools. There was a widening gulf between them and the people, and the solution lay not in futile efforts to recreate the past but in adapting to the future which would undoubtedly be democratic. Invoking the influential article by Snouck Hurgronje of 1908, Wiranatakusuma stressed that an end to *Pangreh Praja* subservience was essential and that decentralization offered some hope for this. But as there was a long history of BB opposition to such emancipation, he felt that it would be better for Regents to be directly under the central government, so dispensing with the local European corps.

Soejono was the next to offer his thoughts on the matter, and he stood somewhere between the *Bupati* of Ponorogo and Bandung. He agreed that the *volkshoofd* element was weakening but nevertheless felt that the *Pangreh Praja* remained a vital link between government and people. Given sufficient education and the continuation of *ontvoogding* – which he regarded as a qualified success – there was no reason why the native officials should not hold their own. So though he did not share Koesoemo Joedo's satisfaction, he did not feel Wiranatakusuma's need for radical change. But Soejono did advocate reform:

he suggested that *priyayi* be relieved of their unpopular police and tax work so they could win the people's trust, and he agreed that the *Pangreh Praja* must be relieved of their subjection to European officials. Either the dual hierarchy must be abolished and the two corps united, said Soejono, or else the BB must be withdrawn to completely advisory positions.

The European official delegates found this stance the most acceptable. J.W. Meyer Ranneft, BB man and *Volksraad* representative, commented tactfully on the speeches by Koesoemo Joedo ('sober and dignified') and Wiranatakusuma ('straight from the heart') but reserved his agreement for Soejono. He did not, however, think any change in the dual system was necessary and confined himself to generalities, expressions of BB solidarity with the *Pangreh Praja,* and a final stirring evocation of the great tradition of the two corps which would triumphantly carry them through temporary difficulties.

The representative of Batavia's officialdom, A. Muhlenveld (later DIA Director 1929-33), also found Soejono's speech 'ninety per cent' acceptable, particularly concerning the linking role of the native officials. Although Muhlenveld himself had asked ten years previously why the two corps could not be unified, he now felt this to be very difficult. On the whole, he too felt that changes must be made but radical restructuring was out of the question. The Adviser for Native Affairs, usual advocate of greater freedom for the *priyayi,* also attended: Ch.O. van der Plas. He expressed surprise at the narrowness of discussion and wondered why no one had raised issues of local self-government or popular participation in policy making, but his remarks were ignored.

All in all little was said that was unexpected, unless perhaps it was Wiranatakusuma's speech. It was a rather bland occasion, yet this in itself is indicative. The Indies had been shaken six or seven months before by communist-led rebellions, and the administration was in confusion trying to untangle the aftermath of the reform law (see below); but politics were never mentioned. Only Wiranatakusuma criticized the reform law, and, as Van der Plas noted, the discussion seldom strayed from the administrative. Obviously, sensitive topics were being avoided and the delegates viewed the future role of the *Pangreh Praja* – at least in public – strictly through bureaucratic blinkers. The contrast with the 1917 debate was clear. Whereas before Djajadiningrat urged the Regents to seize political leadership, in 1927 he restricted himself to a careful summary of the main points made in discussion. The decade between had taught the government *priyayi* that, for them, politics meant supporting the government.

Nevertheless some tensions did show through. Hostility or, at best, wariness towards the BB was clear in several speeches. Both Wiranatakusuma and Soejono saw the European officials as the major stumbling block in the *Pangreh Praja*'s path towards self-respect. Two speakers complained that the problems of the lower *priyayi* were being ignored; indicatively, both protested in Malay while the conference as a whole was conducted in Dutch, and perhaps it was also significant that no one commented on their remarks. Meyer Ranneft's

attitude was probably typical of his own particular constituency, the BB; he affirmed the need for separate corps and called vaguely on tradition, but was mostly concerned with defending the European corps.

Overall, the familiarity of many of the arguments is striking: Wiranatakusuma quoting Snouck Hurgronje from twenty years before, and the reformers in general making points which had been put clearly in the days of *Medan Prijaji* or, at the latest, by Soetardjo in 1919. Similarly the conservatives invoked the *volkshoofd* tradition as they had been doing since 1854. The most immediate argument was for abolition of the dual hierarchy, the unification of BB and *Pangreh Praja*. But this, too, was a rather shopworn idea; it had been deliberated upon and shelved in the first decade of the century. Whereas in 1917 it seemed that the Regents were with a few exceptions unable to respond to the choices before them, the impression in 1927 was that there were few choices they could make, few roads open to them.[15]

Meanwhile Dutch opinion within government, administration and the Indies European community had hardened into a conviction that things had been allowed to go too far, and that it was time to turn back. Protest over the administrative reform law let the government to reconsider it in 1929, while in the meantime dramatic events persuaded many that the political clock should be set back as well. The communist-led rebellions of 1926-1927 seemed to prove that permissiveness did indeed lead to disaster, and this reaction greatly strengthened the hand of those in favour of clear European control within the administration and the Indies as a whole.

The sporadic disturbances in Java in late 1926 and West Sumatra in early 1927 seem hardly worth the name of rebellion; they were badly organized, attracted little support and were soon crushed. But they shocked Java's *priyayi*, as native officials in Banten were the main victims of the abortive rising. A *Wedana* in Pandeglang and several subordinates were killed in November 1926.[16] Their effect upon Dutch attitudes was also profound: they confirmed the victory of conservatives over liberals. This victory was not won in a single battle in 1927, but was rather a gradual gaining of ground since 1918, in a series of skirmishes over *ontvoogding*, Regency Councils, the Revision Commission and the Committee for the Autonomy of Netherlands India. The increasing use of the *Pangreh Praja* as a counter-force against the nationalists emerged more clearly during the same encounters. All these trends pointed in the same direction, towards repression of the nationalist movement and of political involvement by native officials. The further development of these trends and the struggle of the reformist officials are considered in the following chapter.

[15] 'Het bestuurscongres', *De Bestuursgids voor Inlandsche Ambtenaren*, 3, (1927) pp. 1-60; 'Kongress Bestuur Boemipoetra di Weltevreden', *Pandji Poestaka*, 5, (1927) nos. 41 and 42.

[16] McVey, *Rise* pp. 323-46.

CHAPTER 9
COLONIAL CONSERVATISM AND *PANGREH PRAJA* ORGANIZATIONS

The last fifteen years of colonial rule saw few real advances for the *Pangreh Praja*. If the period before the 1926-7 rebellions had been characterized by a gradual contraction of the native officials' range of options, the climate afterwards was even more hostile. Indeed, for most of the following decade the *Pangreh Praja* leaders were on the defensive, trying to protect the gains they had already made from the unsympathetic attentions of a suspicious and economy-minded colonial regime.

Although the rebellions had forced the relatively liberal new Governor General A.C.D. de Graeff (1926-31) to preside over government retribution, in themselves they do not explain the new mood dominating Dutch policy. After a rather quiescent period, the debate on colonial affairs had revived in 1926. Then the rebellions occurred and provided the occasion for a cathartic expression of all the doubts and discontent which had been building up for years, fuelled by the growing disjunction between the waning Ethical Policy and waxing conservatism. The latter was strengthened by the revolts, and in the course of the ensuing debate the outlines of a new colonial ideology emerged.

After 1927 Dutch policy began to recapture some of that sense of purpose which had been typical of Ethicism's early years. But whereas the early 'Ethici' had been confident that native advancement would protect the Netherlands' interests, to many Europeans this now seemed a discredited theory – the 'Ethici' had sown the wind and the resulting whirlwind had endangered the entire Dutch presence in the Indies. The new ideology was more in keeping with this attitude, with the conservative political constellation in The Hague, and with Indies European public opinion. Ethicism's noble goals were never disavowed, welfare and autonomy remained official aims, but nonetheless after 1927 the methods by which they were to be achieved and the underlying social philosophy were very different.

The theory of the Ethical colonial state was based on association, on belief in the benefits of Western education and controlled native access to democratic institutions. It was thought that this would produce a multi-racial elite finding common ground in Western culture and political forms. The new rationale, on the contrary, was centred around ethnic segregation, recognition of regional diversity and the organic development of indigenous institutions. Whereas the moral justification of the 'Ethici' derived from willingness to shoulder their share of the 'White Man's Burden', the new policy displayed its righteousness by stressing native self-realization and respect for indigenous traditions. On a more practical level, proponents of both claimed tactical advantages for their respective policies. 'Ethici' believed their approach would

secure the allegiance of the native elite, while supporters of the new policy argued that their program would push the troublesome nationalists to the political periphery while giving due prominence to traditional chiefs of proven loyalty.

The policy dominant after 1927 was not entirely new – a rather similar approach had been advocated before 1914 by S. Ritsema van Eck, a Forestry official in Java. He believed the key to success in colonial government lay in fitting political structures to the racial and social characteristics of the people they were to serve, and argued that a policy of separate development offered most to the Indies. His recommended formula was segregation plus modernization within a federal framework under the hegemony of the Netherlands *volk*.

It would be a mistake to dismiss Ritsema van Eck as a crank. Idenburg admired his 'statesmanlike view' and 'penetrating analysis' while Welter, though critical, also agreed with many of his ideas. A strongly dissenting voice was that of Van Limburg Stirum. He was distressed by the influence of Ritsema van Eck's views, which he believed conflicted with all shades of native opinion and with the Indies' natural development.[1]

But by 1927 Van Limburg Stirum's definition of 'natural' development had lost ground, and views not so very different from those of Ritsema van Eck found increasing acceptance. They gained respectability because of their apparent congruence with the findings of *adat* (customary) law studies and the theory of dual economy, which stressed the specific character of native institutions. In particular, the colonial philosophy of Hendrik Colijn, though less racial in emphasis, had definite affinities with Ritsema van Eck. Whereas the latter was a publicist on the fringes of the political world, Colijn was at its very centre.

Colijn belonged to a new generation whose views on the Indies derived not from knowledge of Java but from experience of the frontier politics and capitalism of Sumatra. He began his association with the archipelago as a young Aceh Officer in 1893; after his return to the Netherlands in 1908 he was elected to the Second Chamber. This was the beginning of over thirty years in politics, years marked by a strong and continuing interest in colonial affairs. Although Colijn served only four years as Minister of Colonies (1933-7) his ties with Simon de Graaff were very close, so that he was an *eminence grise* of Dutch colonial policy during De Graaff's Ministry (1919-25, 1929-33). Colijn was a conservative, a leader of the right-wing Anti-Revolutionary Party. In between terms of political office he was a director of BPM, Royal Dutch Shell (1914-21), and like the later Shell director and Governor General, B.C. de Jonge

[1] S. Ritsema van Eck, *Bezinning nopens Nederland's Koloniale Staatkunde* (Haarlem, 1929); and his *Onzekerheid en Kentering in Nederland's Koloniale Staatkunde* (Haarlem, 1929); and *Tempo en Richting in de Koloniale Politiek* (Haarlem, 1927); all three brochures were originally articles in the periodical *Vragen des Tijds*. On his influence see Van der Wal, *Volksraad* Vol. I, pp. 249, 282, 332, 330, 358.

(Governor General 1933-6), his priorities and values were much closer to the reactionary Utrecht 'oil faculty' than to those of Leiden, ideological centre of Ethicism.

Colijn was a long-standing critic of Ethical policies; he outlined his ideas in an article of 1917 and developed them further in an influential book published in 1928. He favoured a policy based on decentralized local communities rather than on Batavia, a linking together of existing native social units in island provinces to constitute a federal state. In the Outer Islands the units involved should be villages, ethnic communities and native states, while in Java they would be villages and Regencies. Colijn allowed the nationalist movement no place in his scheme because he believed it to be of little account, an alien element easily controlled by a judicious combination of support for traditional leaders (including the native officials) with firm suppression of extremist groups.

Although the creation of a federal state was never seriously considered before World War II, post-1927 colonial policy followed Colijn in so far as local communities became basic to the strategy of building from the bottom up, rather than from the top down. His attitude towards the native political movement also typified the new policy which, unlike earlier Dutch designs, was intended to serve the Indies as a whole. Due recognition was given to the tremendously increased economic significance of the Outer Islands. In fact the policy seemed to have been shaped to fit these relatively recent acquisitions rather than Java. Colijn at first refused to admit that Java had developed away from the frontier-like Sumatra situation, and in his 1928 book he simply equated the Regents with the *adat* chiefs of the Outer Islands as *volkshoofden.*

Colijn's opinions did not go unchallenged – the most learned and prominent members of Leiden took issue with him. Snouck Hurgronje wondered if he could really want to return the Regents to their servile subjection of the late nineteenth century, while the *adat* law scholar C. van Vollenhoven described a federal system as unworkable. Although Colijn paid little heed to Leiden, he was forced to abandon his Procrustean effort to fit Java to his Sumatra-based theories. In 1929, apparently influenced by Snouck's criticisms, he admitted that the Regents could not simply be regarded as *adat* chiefs and that Java differed considerably from the Outer Islands.[2] This was, however, a grudging admission and it was not followed by any real effort to formulate a specific Java policy.

There was, indeed, a marked lack of creativity in the government's approach to Java after 1925. The characteristic attitude was negative and uninterested, based on stonewall tactics against the nationalists, a distrustful watch over

[2] Brouwer, pp. 135-157; C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Colijn over Indië* (Amsterdam, 1928); Colijn, *Koloniale Vraagstukken;* on later federalism, A. Arthur Schiller, *The Formation of Federal Indonesia 1945-1949* (The Hague and Bandung, 1955).

native officials, and clichés about *volkshoofden.* It was as if the policy-makers felt that Ethicism in Java had produced undesirable change, so the best course of action was simply to defend the status quo. This they proceeded to do for the next fifteen years

But if Batavia hoped to call a halt to the spread of nationalist ideas and to check *Pangreh Praja* efforts to achieve emancipation, it was to be disappointed. Much had indeed changed in Java during the preceding three decades, and the native organizations had developed their own momentum. During the 1920s the nationalist movement had become much more sophisticated. Indonesian students in the Netherlands founded the socialist and nationalist *Perhimpunan Indonesia* (Indonesian Association) in 1922 and its ideas dominated political study clubs and the PNI (*Partai Nasional Indonesia,* Indonesian Nationalist Party) established by Sukarno in 1927. The appeal of these movements to younger Western-educated Indonesians was much stronger than that of earlier parties. If the PKI had been too radical, *Budi Utomo* too 'feudal' and *Sarekat Islam* too *santri* or too *kampung* (village), the new organizations were intellectually acceptable and satisfyingly militant.

Some European officials recognized the depth of elite politicization. Ch.O. van der Plas prepared an important report in 1927 advocating a strategy of channeling change rather than trying to stifle it. He noted with concern that increasing numbers of very well-born youths were joining 'the opposition', the radical nationalist parties. When such young people came from high *Pangreh Praja* families this was particularly unfortunate.

Van der Plas agreed that the native officials were the major bulwark against nationalism, and he was dismayed by the erosion of *priyayi* loyalty. He stressed that the changing role of the corps must be accepted; the *Pangreh Praja* was no longer a traditional ruling class, and native officials were being drawn increasingly from lower social strata. Moreover, he saw that bureaucratization had changed the corps, the *priyayi* mystique was no longer enough to draw men into the service and ensure their effectiveness. An administrative career had to be made attractive with faster promotions, more clerical staff to lighten routine office drudgery, and protection for subordinates against superiors.

There was nothing particularly novel in this report: it echoed Snouck Hurgronje or Soetardjo. Nevertheless, the need for administrative reform was now linked to new and, for Van der Plas, disturbing themes. Nationalist sympathies and democratization in the *Pangreh Praja* reflected the impact of Western education, which was also apparent in that cultural alienation of the corps from the general population which made a mockery of the *volkshoofd* idea. Van der Plas pointed out that many Dutch-educated *priyayi* could barely write their own language and knew little of Java's traditions. It was this *déraciné* group which was most susceptible to extremist appeals. But

whereas a reactionary's conclusion would have been to reduce education, Van der Plas argued for an increase, but with more stress on Islam and local culture.[3]

Van der Plas was right to be concerned over *priyayi* disillusionment. When scions of the noble *Bupati* families publicly repudiated Dutch authority and committed themselves to the idea of an independent nation they underlined the existence of an alternative focus for *priyayi* loyalty and also breached the theoretically united front between regime and aristocracy. The prohibition on native officials' involvement in any but the most conservative movements made it difficult to assess *Pangreh Praja* sympathies, but certainly there were many younger officials who were drawn to the political movements.

There was a growing contrast between progressive Indonesian thought and colonial policy. Whereas the Dutch stressed aristocracy and ethnic and regional diversity, the nationalist trend was towards unity, socialism and democracy. Social modernization appealed to younger officials, who believed that so-called traditional elements weakened the *Pangreh Praja* professionally and undermined its position in the changing society. The government, however, felt that it was these very elements which constituted the strength of the corps, and was determined to protect them at all costs.

Inevitably, then, Van der Plas' plea for the expansion of Western education and *Pangreh Praja* emancipation received little support in The Hague and Batavia. Colijn, like other conservative theorists, placed much of the blame for the rebellions on Western education, so it seemed to him obvious that such schooling be restricted. Unlike Van der Plas, Colijn believed that social and political change in Java was superficial, and that the old institutions could continue to function, provided destructive and alien pressures were removed. His conviction that the Regent-as-*volkshoofd* still played a crucial part in Javanese society was reinforced by the publication in 1929 and 1930 of A.D.A. de Kat Angelino's three volume *magnum opus* on policy and administration in the Indies.

De Kat Angelino was an Orientalist with firm convictions concerning Eastern and Western worlds. He believed that synthesis would produce a stable Indies based on the age-old traditions of the East but animated by the spirit of the West. Such a synthesis could not be imposed but must grow, organically, from within. Government could encourage the people to develop along desired lines but it could not force them. De Kat Angelino's specific proposals were that the Dutch co-operate with native elites, guiding them in proto-parliaments towards a 'fruitful' synthesis and away from the 'sterile nationalism of antithesis'. Translated, this meant effective repressive measures against the nationalists and support for traditional leaders, among whom he included the Javanese Regents. (Despite his emphasis on indigenous forms De Kat Angelino did

[3] Van der Plas report, mr. 457[X]28, see also his memorandum in S.L. van der Wal, (ed.), *Het Onderwijs Beleid in Nederlands-Indie 1900-1942* (Groningen, 1963) pp. 437-40.

support Regency Councils; in 1930 he described them as 'newly planted flowers' which could become suitably organic with time.)[4]

Consequent upon this emphasis on the traditional nature of the *Bupati* was a slackening in government commitment to modernization. This emerged clearly in attitudes to administrative reform. The 1922-25 administrative reorganization had not only created Regency Councils and the three provinces but also a new network of Residencies, which entailed much territorial reshuffling and fundamental changes in European officials' positions. The existing 17 large Residencies became 35 smaller ones, each comprising two or three Regencies. \ The subdivision of Assistant Residency was abolished and Assistant Residents lost their territorial responsibility, being recast as agents of the Resident. They retained their offices in the *kabupaten* capital, but only as the Resident's representatives. Senior Assistant Residents (old style) – about a quarter of the total – were appointed Resident (new style), filling new posts. The office and title of Controleur was abolished; some senior Controleurs became Assistant Residents (new style) while others were given the new title of Officer-Assistant.

In many ways these changes marked a *nadir* for the BB. Batavia had, in effect, moved them from direct involvement in local administration to a supervisory function. In theory, taking territorial responsibility from the Assistant Residents broke the horizontal link between *Pangreh Praja* and BB. Instead of the much abused connection in which the Regent was the Assistant Resident's 'younger brother', it was now decreed that the *Bupati* was the 'elder brother', responsible only to the Resident. This, and the abolition of the office of Controleur, formally destroyed the two main mechanisms by which the BB had dominated the *Pangreh Praja.* But this did not necessarily mean real liberation for the native officials.

Massive opposition was inevitable; European officials felt the government had dangerously weakened its control in rural areas and they also felt that the very existence of their corps was threatened. On a more personal level, their careers were sharply set back. The power and prestige of all Residents and most Assistant Residents was dramatically decreased. The new style Residents were somewhere between the old Residents and the old Assistant Residents, administering an area about half the size of the previous Residencies. With their subordination to provincial Governors, they had also lost much of their cherished freedom, and they found their domain further diminished by the new Regency administration of *Bupati* and Council. Many BB in Java also felt that the real action lay elsewhere, that their colleagues in the Outer Islands, who formed a separate corps, faced greater challenges and were more in the eye of Batavia and The Hague.

[4] Colijn, *Koloniale Vraagstukken* pp. 14-20; De Kat Angelino, *Staatkundig Beleid*, passim and vol. II pp. 1052-9.

If European officials felt that they had been sacrificed by Batavia in the interest of the *Pangreh Praja*, some native officials were also far from pleased with the new situation. This was mostly because the BB was reluctant to give up power, but also because many officials were genuinely confused about their responsibilities and the relationship between Regent and Assistant Resident. Even by Java's standards there was extreme variation in implementation. At the native administrative conference of 1927 Wiranatakusuma complained that although in theory the new Assistant Residents were restricted, in practice they intervened more than before. In their Controleur-like role they pushed the Regent aside by working directly with subordinate native officials and also interposed themselves between Resident and *Bupati*. The result was, concluded Wiranatakusuma, that Regents were worse off and many native officials would choose the old system over the new.

In April 1927 the DIA Director tried to define responsibilities in a circular, but it was vague and of little help; it was then decided to discuss the situation at the 1929 Regents' conferences. Despite Wiranatakusuma's claim, the *Bupati* consensus was in favour of the law. They felt that although the relationship between European and native officials was strained, this was only to be expected in a transition period. The Regents' complaints – in suitably mild and indirect terms – focused on BB reactions. The *Bupati* of Probolinggo gave a very moving, even sentimental, speech on the brotherhood of Resident, Regent and Assistant Resident. He cited the example of a little child who spurns his elder brother's helping hand, only to fall, as a warning against too impatient a desire for independence. The real point of the speech, however, came in the peroration: the Regent emphasized that all brothers must know their place, and now that the Assistant Resident was no longer the Regent's elder but his junior he should conduct himself as such. If he refused to do so, the *Bupati* had every right to report him to the Resident.

Several other Regents also attributed the deterioration in BB-*Pangreh Praja* relations to Assistant Residents' persistence in giving instructions to subordinate *priyayi*. The *Bupati* helpfully suggested specific – and limited – fields suited to the care of the Assistant Residents, such as village agriculture or land leasing. One *Bupati* felt that the Assistant Residents could perhaps be allotted desks somewhere in the Regents' offices. These opinions were those of the more confident and progressive Regents. Many *Bupati* were still reluctant to speak in public, although some did defend Assistant Resident membership in Regency Councils and BB company for *Bupati* on *tournée*. There was however nothing to justify the conservatives' contention that Regents opposed the reform law.[5]

[5] W.P. Hillen, 'De Verhouding tusschen het Inlandsche en het Europeesche Bestuur op Java en Madoera', *Indisch Genootschap*, (1934) pp. 299-318; J.W. Meyer Ranneft, 'Om den geest van het BB', *Koloniaal Tijdschrift*, 29 (1940) pp. 248-58; Pieters, pp. 112-5; on the Regents' conferences see mr. 980/29, 2317/29, 2121/29.

The usual method of coping with bureaucratic failure was to form a commission. So in 1929 the liberal BB official H.J. van Mook and Wiranatakusuma were appointed to untangle the post-reform law confusion. Their solution, a painstaking amendment of existing regulations, comprised the *taakverdeeling* (allocation of tasks) of 1931. It was not intended to alter the law of 1925, but to ensure its 'more efficient and harmonious implementation'. Despite these assurances, *taakverdeeling* undermined the whole thrust of the reforms, particularly as they had applied to lower native officials.

The Regents were not reduced to their former status, they remained the 'elder brothers' responsible to the Resident, but apart from this the BB was restored to its old position. The Controleurs were reinstated, tightening that European grip on native officials which had been so carefully loosened by the reform law. The precise definition of spheres of competence made it clear that the *Pangreh Praja* was subordinate to the BB and that the reform law was never going to lead to European withdrawal from local administration or to abolition of the dual hierarchy. While the detailing of Regents' work strengthened the legal basis of their authority, it also exposed how insignificant most of their powers were.

Three provisions in particular weakened the *Pangreh Praja*: authority over the native legal officials, *Jaksa* and Chief *Jaksa,* was transferred from Regent to Assistant Resident; BB control over the field-police was confirmed; and a new rule made 'consultation' with the Assistant Resident obligatory in all decisions affecting the renting out of land. So although formally the administrative reform law still stood, *taakverdeeling* extended BB power and tightened their monopoly of legal and physical sanctions. Later an authority on local administration commented that although the period 1918 to 1930 had been difficult for the European corps, after 1930 the BB consolidated its position until its actual strength exceeded that given by regulations.[6] The European officials were gratified, but the native officials were not. During the early thirties *Pangreh Praja* leaders campaigned against the new regulations, but to little avail. They were not only confronted by an unsympathetic regime, but were also hamstrung by the straitened economic circumstances of the time.

Reactionary policies were strengthened during the early 1930s by the depression. Private enterprise, big plantations and government were all hit hard by the crisis and were forced to retrench. It was comfortably assumed that the Indonesian sector could easily absorb economic shocks, with the unemployed returning to the subsistence village and with barter replacing cash. But not all dismissed Indonesians could or would go back to peasant life in the villages, and for them the depression was a very difficult time. For those who remained in their jobs it was not so bad, as the cost of living dropped considerably. But

[6] Hillen, pp. 304-8; Pieters, pp. 113-20; the comforting reflection on BB strength was by Meyer Ranneft, 'Om den geest van het BB'.

retrenchment brought redundancies, particularly in government departments, as the bureaucracy was a major target in the effort to economize. True to Parkinson's Law, the government apparatus had expanded rapidly; the number of employees increased by 54% between 1917 and 1928. The *Pangreh Praja* was included in personnel reductions, although its rate of increase had been well below average – the number of officials (Assistant *Wedana* to Regent inclusive) had been just over 1,500 before the first World War, and was still less than 1,700 in 1930. Where possible the government dismissed employees regarded as superfluous, but on the whole it concentrated on reducing the wage bill. Salary cuts were enforced and wages were reduced by reclassifying higher jobs as belonging to the lower, native-level scale.

The *Pangreh Praja* was affected by obligatory pay cuts. Secretarial staff were dismissed as well as about 30 *Wedana* and 100 Assistant *Wedana*. Work was redistributed, reverting to pre-*ontvoogding* practice. Part of this reform program had been a lightening of native officials' routine work load so they had more time for responsible administration, but this was regarded as impossible in the circumstances.[7] Another measure which threatened *Pangreh Praja* progress was the reduction in educational expenditure.

All forms of education suffered, but the more expensive, and in particular the HIS (Dutch-language native schools), lost most. Training schools for native officials were also severely affected, forced to reduce their intake and, in many cases, closed. The depression came at a particularly bad time for these institutions, as a major reorganization had occurred in the late twenties and the government was waiting to see the effects before proceeding. In 1927 the six OSVIA had been consolidated into four higher-level MOSVIA which took junior high school graduates as pupils and gave them three years of vocation-oriented training. The depression caused the government to shut down the school at Madiun in 1931, at Probolinggo in 1932 and at Bandung in 1934 so that all MOSVIA education was concentrated in Magelang. Since the *Bestuurschool* at Batavia closed in 1934 there was a steep drop in the number of officials in training; whereas this had exceeded 800 after World War I, by 1936 it had fallen to less than 100.

Any government would have been forced to reduce expenditure but it is clear that the regime's conservative attitudes determined priorities. Economizing focused on administration, education and such welfare programs as public health and agricultural extension.[8]

[7] Sutherland, 'Pangreh Pradja', pp. 433-35 gives details on salaries; H.M.J. Hart, 'De personeelsuitgaven van het land', *Koloniale Studien*, 17, ii (1932) pp. 316-335; G. Scholte, 'Eenige opmerkingen over gemiddeld volksinkomen en gimeddeld salaris der ambtenaren', *Koloniale Studien*, 17, i (1932) pp. 334-7.

[8] On MOSVIA (*Middelbaar Opleiding Scholen voor Inlandsch Ambtenaren*, Secondary Training Schools for Native Officials) see *De Bestuursacademie* (Batavia, 1937); articles in *Pemimpin* and *Penjoeloeh*, 1930 to 1932.

Pangreh Praja organizations had little success in softening the impact of the depression on their members. They were not alone in this – the other main associations of state employees (the natives' PVPN, the Eurasian-oriented CIVO and the more European VVL) also won few concessions, although the government instituted regular consultation in 1932. In March 1935 the *Pangreh Praja's* PPBB (discussed below) initiated the creation of a new association of native public servants, the FIOO, led by Soetardjo. The general aim was to improve co-ordination between the nine member unions which ranged from a clerks' association to one of government veterinary surgeons. But this also had little impact on the officials' bargaining position. It was only after 1936, as the effects of the depression receded, that Batavia began to modify its policies to meet employees' requests.[9]

Economic pressures combined with the backlash against administrative reform to focus attention upon native officials' financial probity. A number of *Bupati* were prematurely retired, and some Regents became anxious lest reactionaries, stimulated by this anticipated proof of native irresponsibility, should use the scandals against the Regency Councils. To prevent this the *Bupati* of Meester Cornelis suggested a pooling of resources in 1930, and finally in June 1933 the Association of Regencies on Java and Madura was formed. It had its own accounting and financial inspection service. It is probable that the reduced circumstances of many *priyayi* led them to press their claims on successful relatives, and greater need plus the Councils' relative financial freedom did lead to some irregularities, but there was hardly a 'wave of corruption'.[10]

One factor influencing the government's lack of sympathy for *priyayi* hardship was the divergence between the way it and they conceived of the native elite's needs. While Scholte, the state statistician, was busy with his figures proving that the *Pangreh Praja* was overpaid in relation to the Indonesian standard of living, the officials themselves complained that government policies were forcing them back to a village life-style. One leader said they must begin again to wear long hair, smoke *strootjes* (leaf-wrapped cigarettes), consult *dukun* (native healers) and collect produce from the people, for their salaries could no longer support a modern way of life.[11]

Underlying this difference on government *priyayi's* life-style was the issue of 'tradition' and 'change' within the *Pangreh Praja.* As usual, attitudes towards the Regents serve as a touchstone in locating variations of opinion, and despite regular insistence that the *volkshoofden* were alive and well, there were growing signs that the native corps had in fact changed irrevocably.

[9] Sandra, *Sedjarah Pergerakan Kaum Buruh Indonesia* (Jakarta, 1961); J.M. Pluvier, *Overzicht van de Ontwikkeling der Nationalistische Beweging in Indonesie in de jaren 1930 tot 1942* ('s-Gravenhage and Bandung, 1963).

[10] Mr. $632^{X}/34$, $1413^{X}/34$; Djoemhana Wiriaatmadja, 'Vereeniging van Regentschappen op Java en Madoera', *Bestuursgids* (Sedio Moelio) 1 (1933) pp. 11-17; the Association published a journal, *Berita Kabopaten.*

[11] Scholte; Soedarnadi, 'HBBL nota', *Onze Bode,* 6 (1934) pp. 15-20.

During the thirties both the form and style of the relationship between *Pangreh Praja* and Dutch authorities contrasted with those of the teens or early twenties. The differences reflected the changing social and political climate of the Indies as well as the emergence of new leaders in the corps. With the decline of associationist ideas and greater stress on racially defined nationalism the dividing line between Indonesians and Europeans was more sharply drawn. This placed the *Pangreh Praja*, essentially a link between the two, in an obviously invidious position. At the same time, native officials increasingly tended to conduct negotiations with the government on a union to employer basis through associations, publications and councils. After 1928 *Pangreh Praja* leadership made increasingly effective use of these Western forms, revealing a limited institutionalization and rationalization of relations between native officials and colonial government, between *priyayi* leaders and followers.

The early associations of native officials -- OOB, Oiba, Mardi Oetomo and Regents' Association -- had lapsed into ineffectuality by the mid-twenties. Although they performed useful work in collecting information and increasing solidarity among their members, it is doubtful if they had much influence with the Dutch. European officials tended to listen to outstanding individuals, such as the five prominent Regents who, by virtue of their personalities, abilities and links with prominent 'Ethici' and officials, were the dominant *priyayi* spokesmen until, in the early thirties, they evolved into elder statesmen.

Koesoemo Joedo and Djajadiningrat reached the peak of the Indies' hierarchy with their appointment to the Governor General's advisory Council of the Indies in 1930; they served there until 1933. Then both retired, Koesoemo Joedo to return to the Netherlands until his death in the mid-fifties, Djajadiningrat to write his memoirs. In the late twenties Koesoemo Oetojo and Soejono left their *kabupaten* for the *Volksraad,* where Wiranatakusuma was also active. He remained a maverick, acting as spokesman for officials' unions and irritating Dutchmen with his frank speeches. He was the only one of the five who remained a *Bupati* until the Japanese occupation.

These men were products of the first stage of Ethicism, their ideas and *modus operandi* were shaped by their aristocratic backgrounds and their personal relationships with liberal Dutchmen. Their involvement in administrative politics continued into the thirties, but by the late twenties a somewhat different type of *Pangreh Praja* leader had appeared on the scene, a new generation of union-based publicists and council spokesmen, of whom the most important was Soetardjo Kartohadikoesoemo.

Soetardjo's view of the *Pangreh Praja's* proper function combined Javanese *priyayi* morality with an admiration for efficiency. Throughout his long career he pressed for redress of the wrongs he had first diagnosed as an OOB member in 1919. In particular, he opposed the humiliation of government *priyayi* by their superiors in *Pangreh Praja* and BB. Soetardjo saw that the native officials'

insecurity and frustration were rooted in their lack of formal protection, their inability to control their own professional lives and their demoralizing exclusion from responsibility. This situation encouraged the weakness and sycophancy which was rife in the corps.

The native officials' organizations seemed unable to press these points home to the Dutch. Some *priyayi* leaders felt that the main cause of their impotence was their lack of unity. As early as 1920 Wiranatakusuma approached Soetardjo, then a pupil at the *Bestuurschool,* to discuss the sad state of the *Pangreh Praja.* Soetardjo argued that a united front, encompassing all ranks and educational levels, would be far more effective than the existing wrangling groups. In an effort to achieve this he began negotiations with other officials' organizations – he himself was an OOB leader – but the Regents' Association was reluctant and certain groups within the OOB itself opposed the idea.

Since about 1924 the OOB had been moribund. A group of young officials in Semarang attributed this to its extreme caution which was caused, they believed, by the presence of high-ranking conservatives. The OOB's heterogeneous membership led to internal dissension and young dynamic officials were thwarted by their more senior colleagues. The Semarang group, known as the 'New OOB', was in complete disagreement with Soetardjo's plan for an even broader association which seemed destined to repeat the OOB's mistakes only on a larger scale. When it was clear that the OOB would become the nucleus of the new organization, the Semarang group withdrew. At a meeting in Semarang on December 2, 1928 they founded the Vaib (*Vereeniging van Ambtenaren bij den Inlandschen Bestuursdienst,* Association of Officials in the Native Administrative Service).

Vaib, like the OOB, was only open to graduates of officials' training schools. But unlike the OOB there were also restrictions on the rank of members – only Assistant *Wedana* or below could join. This was first modified so that *Wedana* could become members and in 1934 *Patih* were admitted. No Regents were allowed. The Vaib leadership was drawn from an even narrower stratum than the regulations would suggest; throughout its existence most of its governing board were Semarang *Mantri Polisi* or Assistant *Wedana* with police functions. Prominent among its founders and leaders were Abdulkadir Widjojoatmodjo, Soedarnadi, Soetjipto Moeljodihardo and Soemardjo, while Hermen Kartowisastro later became the Vaib *Volksraad* representative (1935-9) and chief spokesman. A Semarang *Wedana,* Salamoen, was *Volksraad* member at the end of the colonial period.[12]

Several months after Vaib was formed, the PPBB (*Perhimpoenan Pegawai Bestuur Boemipoetra,* Association of Native Administrative Officials) was created

[12] Arsad Prawiraatmadja, 'Pengalaman dalam bestuursdienst di Residentie Banten dan Madoera', *Pemimpin,* 4 (1934) pp. 41-3; 'Een korte schets van de ontwikkeling der Vaib', *Gedenkboek Vaib,* pp. 6-13; *Onze Bode,* passim.

from the OOB and Oiba at a meeting in Surakarta on March 30th, 1929. Wiranatakusuma was president of the new organization and Soetardjo was vice-president until he became president in 1934. There were no restrictions on membership – all ranks and educational levels could join, provided they were members of the native corps; village heads and their staff were not admitted.

Within five months PPBB membership had reached the respectable total of 2,500 in 40 branches; by mid-1930 there were over 3,700 members, while at the end of 1937 the 74 branches totalled 4,800 members. Vaib was, understandably, a much smaller organization. Starting with eighteen founders it took over a year to build up a membership of less than 300; by early 1935 there were over 730 members and in 1938 the total passed the thousand. Both organizations had members throughout Java, although each showed a slight concentration of strength in particular areas: the PPBB in the east, Vaib in central Java. Both had branches in the Outer Islands, but these were not particularly important. In the late thirties, however, the PPBB united with the West Sumatra based *Viba*, a movement of native officials, which increased its Outer Island strength to eighteen branches in Sumatra, and one each in Sulawesi and Kalimantan.

Although PPBB and Vaib had similar goals and an obvious common cause they were unable to co-operate. On the contrary, there was competition and even hostility between the two. Soetardjo, who emphasized solidarity, was very disappointed that Vaib and the Regents' Association regularly refused to merge with the PPBB. Vaib's rejection in particular was very much resented and this feeling was sharpened by its criticisms of the PPBB. Early articles in the Vaib journal offended Soetardjo and in April 1930 he accused it of selfishness, of pursuing advantages for its own graduate clique, and with fomenting hostility towards the more broadly based PPBB.

Despite bad relations between the unions' leaders, Soetardjo continued to hope that a united front could be achieved, presumably under his control. But his hopes received a further blow in 1933 when a group of non-graduate officials, taking a leaf from Vaib's exclusivist book, decided to form their own association rather than join the PPBB. Then it was the PPBB's journal which adopted a most hostile tone, accusing the new movement of poaching members.

The split between Vaib and PPBB remained the most important, however, both because of their size and also because their apparent similarities made it all the more disappointing that progressive officials were unable to set aside their differences. But in reality the divergence between the two was deep. Their differing attitudes towards Javanese society and the *Pangreh Praja*'s role resembled the early break between the Semarang 'New OOB' and the central OOB. The confident and outspoken young Vaib officials claimed that the heterogenous PPBB was paralyzed by fear of offending its high ranking and conservative members, that it was too unwieldy and *kurang vooruitstrevend* (not progressive enough). To the PPBB leaders, Soetardjo in particular, Vaib was in tactical error

in refusing to unite with other movements because it weakened the whole cause by its short-sighted pursuit of sectional advantage. To Soetardjo, this was a prime example of the selfish attitudes which held the *Pangreh Praja* back.

There was also an interesting wider contrast between Vaib and PPBB. The former was more radical in its social criticisms than the latter, attacking 'feudalism' and the hereditary principle, while the PPBB tended to talk of solidarity and harmony, and was prepared to compromise to maintain its broad appeal. Yet, although a Dutch observer characterized both organizations as 'centre Left', Vaib was actually well to the political right of the PPBB. This apparent disjunction between social and political attitudes might seem unusual, but it reflects the Dutch-mindedness of Vaib leaders, their strong orientation towards European attitudes. Although PPBB leaders came to terms with its socially more conservative members they were much closer to the nationalist movement than was Vaib, and more 'Indonesian' in outlook. In this, Vaib shows parallels with Hatta and Sjahrir's cadre-based PNI *Baru*, while PPBB resembles Sukarno's syncretist approach.

As professional associations the two movements followed a broadly similar course, although the PPBB was more visible and generally more uncompromising. This was due partly to its size, but also to the abilities and strong convictions of Soetardjo, who dominated the organization. During the early thirties the Unions made full use of journals and the *Volksraad* in their campaigns against *taakverdeeling* and retrenchment. The PPBB began issuing *Pemimpin* (The Leader) a bi-lingual (Dutch and Malay) monthly edited by Soetardjo, in July 1929; it soon achieved a circulation of between five and seven thousand. The Vaib periodical, a Dutch-language monthly called *Onze Bode* (Our Messenger), appeared in January 1929; within five years its circulation was a thousand. Both magazines published articles on administration, union activity and social issues, but a mainstay was their reprinting of *Volksraad* speeches on *Pangreh Praja* affairs.[13]

The government regarded native officials in the *Volksraad* as duty bound to support government policies; since PPBB was critical, Batavia felt that it was all the more important that loyal supporters of the colonial tie also be represented in the Assembly. This determined the outcome of a debate over *Volksraad* membership for *Bupati*. There were those who wished to see the office of Regent declared irreconcilable with membership, as months in Batavia reduced the *Bupati*'s administrative effectiveness and local political influence. If Regents' experience was needed on the council then retired *Bupati* could be appointed. Opponents of this view argued that the Regents' presence was essential as they were moderate, had an intimate knowledge of the people and

[13] *Pemimpin*, 1 (1929) and 9(1938), and 'Een korte schets van de ontwikkeling der Vaib', give growth details, see also *Onze Bode* and *Pemimpin* passim; for Dutch comment, Van der Wal, *Volksraad* vol. II, pp. 179, 190. Interviews, Soetardjo, Jakarta 1969-70; Abdul Kadir Widjojatmodjo, Rijswijk, 1969; Soedarnadi, Jakarta, 1970.

could be expected to support the government. Membership was also held to be a useful political experience. Retired *Bupati* would not be so reliable, as they did not feel the same bond with the government and, more pragmatically, they were not subject to bureaucratic discipline: they would be 'uncontrollable'. This was disputed by those who believed that the government exaggerated the Regents' loyalty (they had voted against it on the 1931 education budget and the 1932 move to control private schools), but orthodox tactics prevailed and the voices of the *volkshoofden* continued to provide votes and legitimation for the Dutch.

As it turned out, the voice of the native officials did not always sound as sweetly in Batavia's ears as it would have wished. Koesoemo Oetojo, Soejono and Wiranatakusuma criticized policy on administration and the nationalist movement, while Soetardjo frequently outraged pro-government members by his bluntness. Although docile or conservative Regents toed the government line their impact was less than that of the so-called PPBB group, which most *Bupati* eventually joined and which became the major native group in the *Volksraad* in the 1930s.

Taakverdeeling was most strongly criticized by PPBB spokesmen Wiranatakusuma and Soetardjo in the *Volksraad* during 1931-32. The latter made a biting speech criticizing the BB's contemptuous treatment of native officials, and expressing his doubts concerning reform – he remarked that for nineteen years the government had displayed excellent intentions, but nothing was ever achieved.

When the details of *taakverdeeling* were known, Soetardjo described them as 'a slap in the face' for the native officials; Wiranatakusuma agreed. Both speakers linked *taakverdeeling* to Dutch distrust of *priyayi* and regarded it as a slur on their maturity. They repeated the goals of the PPBB. First and foremost they wanted an end to racial dualism, but they also pressed for more limited reforms, including selection based on abilities and a higher academic education for *priyayi*. They recommended a reduction in European officials to one per residency, and a transfer of the police powers of Assistant Residents and other BB to native officials. These demands, far more aggressively phrased than the tentative requests of the World War I period, reveal the growing frustration of progressive *Pangreh Praja* leaders. They felt that they kept hammering away at the same fundamental issues without making headway.[14]

Towards the end of the 1920s, *hormat* was still a subject of much discussion. The Regents of Probolinggo and Bangkalan, and the Governor of East Java all criticized excessive *hormat* in well publicized circulars and urged

[14] Vb. 8 July 1936 no. 3; S. Abeyasekere, 'Relations between the Indonesian Co-operating Nationalists and the Dutch, 1935-1942', (Ph.D. Thesis, Monash University, 1972); *Onze Bode*, *Pemimpin* and *Penjoeloeh*, passim; *Penjoeloeh* (The Guide) was a scholarly publication by the PPBB and the Regents' Association under Soetardjo's editorship, it appeared every two months from August 1931.

their various subordinates to adopt more liberal attitudes. Soetardjo, who had always been an outspoken critic of extreme *hormat*, made it the central theme of the first PPBB congress, held in Surakarta in 1929.

The secretary of the PPBB's Surabaya branch led a '*hormat* commission' to investigate the situation. It found that the *Pangreh Praja* and BB were by far the most rigid of all government services in *hormat* use and that, despite all efforts, it was still customary for subordinates to sit on the floor, without shoes or spectacles, to *sembah* every time they answered and to use respectful vernacular forms to their superiors. The commission concluded these customs were artifically maintained by both high and low officials. Lesser *priyayi* still saw *hormat* as a means of protection and ingratiation, while BB men insisted on it because they opposed Westernization of the *Pangreh Praja.* European officials talked of preserving native culture and exhorted *priyayi* to 'be true to their *adat* and honour', but the fine phrases covered an insistence on slavish sycophancy. The Regents claimed they could not abandon *hormat* because Europeans expected them to receive it, while the BB said that they were respecting tradition and *Bupati* rights; in fact both sides enjoyed it.

By 1929, however, Batavia and most officials agreed – at least in public – that the *sembah, jongkok* and so on must only be performed in certain circumstances and that many arbitrary local regulations should be abolished. Clothing styles were to be determined by Batavia alone, while the use of the high form of address *Kanjeng* was to be limited to Resident and above – European clerks could no longer enjoy the apprehensive homage of nervous young *priyayi.*[15] The tide had begun to swing against the old deference forms, but this was more because Western education was changing attitudes throughout the *Pangreh Praja* than because of any specific change in regulations.

There were still many senior officials who insisted on the lesser niceties of *hormat,* but the few who demanded, for example, that a *Bestuurschool* graduate *Patih* sit on the floor making the *sembah* every time he dared speak – in high Javanese – were increasingly isolated. Generally speaking, *hormat* observance decreased throughout the *Pangreh Praja* during the thirties, at least in official contexts. Within the privacy of their own homes most *priyayi* continued to show customary respect for parents and superiors. This suggests that the increasingly Western and workmanlike atmosphere of the civil service had made many officials feel uncomfortable with *hormat*, while its multiracial application was a particularly sore point. The bitterness shown in the remarks of the Surabaya commission concerning the BB reinforces this impression.

Other continuing grievances of the native officials were their uncertain and vulnerable legal position, injustices in appointment and promotion, and insufficient recognition of merit in the career structure. Criticism of what

[15] *Pemimpin,* 1 to 3 (1929-1932), passim; Giem, 'Hebt je moed? De hormat in de Inlandsche BB kringen', *Timboel,* 3 (1929) pp. 257-60.

were considered unfair *Bupati* promotions were common. Vaib and the PPBB were united in condemning the accelerated promotion of Regents' sons, who were sped through the corps and past better men so that they held the required rank when the time came for them to succeed their fathers. Colonial theory claimed such favouritism was essential to maintain the *Bupati*'s traditional authority. But to the *Pangreh Praja* organizations, it was a particularly acute example of the growing disjunction between Dutch policy and both social reality and administrative requirements.

CHAPTER 10
'TRADITIONAL' AUTHORITY AND 'MODERN' OFFICIALS

The colonial regime remained firmly committed to the belief that the *priyayi*'s traditional authority, as concentrated in the Regents' influence over the people, was the strongest bulwark in the defence of Dutch Java. This belief persisted despite the government's own gestures towards reform and growing evidence of changes in the *priyayi* world.

The 1913 circular on the selection of Regents, for all its vagueness, had formally introduced ability, education and experience as additional prerequisites for appointment alongside birth. By 1930 it was possible to argue that the government had so deviated from the principle of hereditary succession that Regents could no longer be regarded as local rulers. Centralization of appointments and the need to meet the post-1913 prerequisites led the government to recruit *Bupati* from a much wider area. Of 75 Regents in 1930 only 30 had succeeded their fathers, three their fathers-in-law. Of the remainder, 24 were from *Bupati* families of other Regencies while 18 did not have a *Bupati* among their grandfathers, fathers or fathers-in-law. Birth was still a major factor, but the core of hereditary succession had been lost. According to colonial theory the *Bupati* preserved the aristocratic essence which permeated the *Pangreh Praja* as a whole and gave it its unique usefulness. But in social reality the native corps was becoming ever less aristocratic and more technocratic, so the hereditary Regents appeared increasingly incongruous.[1]

Analysis of the social background of OSVIA pupils shows that an increasing proportion came from lower civil service families, or had fathers who were not employed by government. This trend existed in the early twentieth century, but became much stronger after 1915. The OSVIA pattern did not necessarily apply to the native corps as a whole, as these schools were only one means of entry. Aristocratic families often preferred to send their sons to the more highly regarded Dutch high schools; this was the case for many Regents, although the majority were OSVIA graduates by the end of the colonial period. Many native officials had a lower education than OSVIA. In 1930, for example, less than two fifths of all Java's *Wedana* and less than a quarter of the Assistant *Wedana* had OSVIA or higher training. In general the trend towards democratization in the schools seems to have been more pronounced than that in the native corps as a whole, so that OSVIA provided the ladder by which less well born candidates climbed into the *priyayi*.

OSVIA graduates formed the professional backbone of the *Pangreh Praja*, and were regarded as the nucleus of the modern civil service of the future. As older and less educated officials were retired the OSVIA graduates would become more typical of the corps; hence the shifting social composition of their student

[1] On *Bupati* appointments, Van Mook, 'Een academische opleiding . . . '; Sutherland, 'Pangreh Pradja', appendix IV.

body indicated a less aristocratic *Pangreh Praja* in the future. A similar trend was more strongly evident in the *Bestuurschool,* where lesser *priyayi* or commoners constituted between one fifth and one half of the pre-1920 pupils, between one quarter and one half during the twenties, and about one half during the thirties. This is particularly interesting as the officials selected for the *Bestuurschool* were those marked for high office; most were expected to become *Patih* or, if possible, Regent.[2]

In contrast to this overall *Pangreh Praja* situation, mobility into the *kabupaten* was very limited. Right up to the Japanese occupation the Regents remained an aristocratic group; at any given time only a handful can be identified as being of humble origin. Such identification is also open to doubt, because a man described as being 'of low birth', 'coming up from the ranks', could often produce a genealogy showing ties with ancient families in support of his own claim that he came from good *priyayi* stock, even though his father might have been a messenger boy. Many men from long lines of middle-ranking officials such as *Wedana* bore the low title *Mas* and belonged very definitely to the *priyayi* even though to Europeans, less at home with fine distinctions, they were *homines novi.* The Dutch tended to see such appointments as a sign that the old Regent aristocracy was under siege, that the prestige of the *volkshoofd* was in danger. But in fact it is quite possible that more men from this sort of background had been appointed Regent before the twentieth century, before adherence to dogma, regulation and self-consciousness about social change made Batavia's bureaucrats cling closely to the hereditary principle.

Although colonial ideologues continued to support the principle as a guarantee of popular loyalty, in reality it could only enhance the Regents' effectiveness if it strengthened their relationship with both government and people. It would become counter-productive as soon as it weakened their ability to meet the expectations of either Batavia or the village. The government was anxious to protect the Regents' *volkshoofd* status, but reformers feared that this meant relegating *Bupati* to a hollow ceremonial role. The Regents, excluded from responsibility, would then be powerless; popular knowledge of this impotence would destroy their credibility far more certainly than would abolition of the hereditary principle.

In reality the bases of the Regents' authority were several – there should have been no either-or situation forcing a choice between birth and ability. The problem had been created by mid-nineteenth century Dutch policy-makers who elevated an essentially pragmatic guideline into a constitutional rule. Their successors thereby lost freedom to manoeuvre, as they had either to support or to violate an established principle, and so a graded range of options was reduced to two alternatives. This dichotomy was reflected in the rhetoric: people were

[2] Sutherland, 'Pangreh Pradja', Appendices IV, V, VI; Van Mook, 'Een academische opleiding', p. 5 note 1.

either for or against the principle. While critics were probably right in concluding that the regulation was more a bother than a benefit, its supporters, such as De Kat Angelino, firmly believed it to be an essential linchpin in the colonial system.

De Kat Angelino held that the Regents' position should be strengthened by deliberate retraditionalization. He granted that the hereditary principle was an anachronism in the eyes of nationalist leaders, but maintained that to the people it was a divinely-willed guarantee of security and welfare. Therefore the government should not only maintain it, but apply it more rigidly. Batavia should recognize that administrative competence was not essential: government could always be left to the *Patih*. De Kat Angelino also argued that advanced academic education would do the *Bupati* more harm than good; he favoured an elite military-style school for Regents, designed to develop the qualities desired in a ruling class. During the thirties some *Bupati* themselves openly urged a forceful strengthening of the Regents' traditional status and opposed reforms.[3]

Adherence to the hereditary principle was based on the dubious assumptions that *Pangreh Praja* authority derived from the corps' presumed noble past and that this essential aristocratic aura could be maintained simply by ensuring that son followed father in the *kabupaten*. The principle did not enhance the native corps' administrative performance, while it offended many professional officials and the intelligentsia. It was based on political myth. This is not to say that high birth and the qualities associated with it were irrelevant. On the contrary, they were extremely valuable assets for those in authority, and the aristocratic aura retained its ability to impress. The point is that this aura was not narrowly dependent on birth, but – as had always been the case – it was derived from a complex of factors including rank, achieved status, personality and ability as well as family origin.

Dutch unwillingness to recognize the discrepancy between reality and the *volkshoofd* theory was also apparent in their refusal to acknowledge how the changing economic basis of the Regents' position affected their social role. For *Bupati* money – or the lack of it – was a continual worry. Local society, relatives, many Dutch officials and most *Bupati* themselves had expensive ideas as to the appropriate pattern of living and giving for Regents. While the more massive entertainments and costly diversions of the nineteenth century *Bupati* were unusual by the thirties, they had their modest equivalents, including horse-racing and motor-car collecting, and it was still generally expected that the *Bupati* live an affluent aristocratic life. In addition to the somewhat scaled down traditional demands of *noblesse oblige*, Regents were also faced by new and unavoidable expenses, among which a good Dutch education for their children had high priority. This was all the more difficult as their income had actually declined during the twentieth century.

[3] De Kat Angelino's and other memoranda in mr. 1470[x]/33.

Restriction of the Regent's right to levy contributions or accept gifts from the people had been accompanied by higher salaries, but the overall effect was often a reduction of income. The new pay scales had also resulted in the extension of income-tax to *Bupati*, while the cuts of the depression meant that in 1935 a Regent was earning less in pre-tax salary than he had a decade before. One Regent estimated that a turn of the century *Bupati* in West Java had a disposable annual income of about 3,000 guilders, but by the late thirties this had been reduced to 725 guilders. This was a handsome salary when compared to those of other officials – more than twice a *Wedana's* total pay – but the income gap was no longer commensurate with the difference in expectations – at least when *Bupati* tried to maintain their traditional standard of living.

Dutch support for the Regent-as-*volkshoofd* was not accompanied by any willingness to bankroll the necessary conspicuous consumption or the maintenance of shadowy client networks. While indebtedness had always been extremely common among the *priyayi*, the spectacle of crowds of money-lenders and creditors gathering outside an official's house every payday was felt to be an undesirable anachronism, and Batavia took a critical view of badly-managed budgets. But when in the late thirties a series of Regents, crippled by debt, were forced to request government assistance, the local BB attributed it to the demands of office rather than extravagance. Many Regents never recovered from the initial expenses attendant upon appointment; furnishing the *kabupaten* cost at least several thousand guilders, while the outlay for the actual investiture – clothes and entertainments – was estimated at an average of 3,000. So Batavia decided to defray approved expenses and to help *Bupati* consolidate their debts.[4] This was a typical compromise solution; the immediate problems were prevented from getting any worse, but the basic causes were left untouched. *Bupati* were to remain hereditary *volkshoofden*, but rational views of permissible expenditure precluded provision of a suitable income.

The inability of 1930s *Bupati* to be confident traditional chiefs was not just a money matter. Since at least the mid-nineteenth century the foundations of their position had been changing as they moved further from their local bases and became more dependent on the alien regime. As their functions changed – from local chief to security and crop overseer to semi-bureaucrat – so too did the ways in which they used their following of relatives, allies, clients and spies. By the twentieth century their control over these followings was less assured, as the Dutch sense of personal and professional propriety combined with decreasing incomes to sharply narrow the *Bupati's* range of open contacts and patronage. Good Regents did not consort with village *jago* or charismatic mystics, they did not sleep with too many headmen's daughters, and they could not distribute jobs, feasts or floggings as they had in the old days. The very

[4] Mr. $737^{X}/38$; $1413^{X}/34$, $342^{X}/37$ on Regent's indebtedness.

power of the traditional *priyayi* chief was based on fear and patronage, but in the modern Indies punishment and reward followed the regulations – at least in theory.

The result was that the high *priyayi*'s exercise of power in traditional ways was limited, while they were forbidden to expand into nationalist politics. When the Dutch did encourage the *Bupati* to mobilize their followers and act in the old style (as happened in Priangan in the mid-twenties), the results made Batavia uneasy. It was all too emotional, violent and irregular, and so order was restored. *Priyayi* networks and village factions submerged beneath the surface again. This did not mean that Regents were without a clientele; although there was great variation depending on area and personality, most *Bupati* retained influence and followers. But the real economic and power content of the relationship was less, so networks were probably less forceful, latent or even atrophying as new institutions and groups took over many of their functions.

Nonetheless, the strength of *Bupati* influence in the rural areas was still capable of shocking two young men (one Dutch, one Javanese) who entered their respective civil services in the mid-thirties. Both were surprised at the gap between their expectations and reality. The *Controleur* felt that the old BB had vanished since the reform law, while the *Mantri Polisi* found it all much more traditional than he had anticipated.

The young Dutchman wrote 'The Assistant Residents are, as it were, diplomatic agents to the Regents (one could almost say: to the Regents' courts); the lower (European) officials, *Controleurs* and *Aspirant Controleurs* are virtually embassy attaches'. He went on in elegiac vein to describe how the Regency BB, once the centre of everything, were now outsiders, reduced to exercising indirect influence on the real power – the *Pangreh Praja*. On the whole he found the native corps extremely able, surpassing the all too often arrogant BB in their understanding of their work, although they paid for their Western expertise by loss of their cultural identity. He feared the *priyayi* were developing a shallow *mestizo* culture and contempt for their own traditions. But he was convinced that the future lay with the *Pangreh Praja*, not the BB. He regretted his own choice of a career, concluding that there was no satisfaction in the work, especially for the lower BB who sat on the sidelines watching others act and feeling superfluous.

Similar insights awaited the MOSVIA graduate when, as a self-described 'true town man', he made his first acquaintance with rural administration. The power and invulnerability of the Regent and the extreme social distance between *Bupati* and *Patih* struck the young official most unfavourably. It was only when he saw Regents in action that he understood why they were addressed as *Gusti* (Lord), and he decided that the Javanese political system was fundamentally aristocratic.[5]

[5] Letter from an anonymous Controleur, in ARA Meyer Ranneft collection no. 905; the anonymous *priyayi* official 'S' gives his impressions in 'Terugblik', *Onze Bode*, 10 (1938) pp. 139-142.

Both young men were fresh from their studies and failed to appreciate the crucial distinction between real and apparent power. The Regent was all powerful – as long as he was doing what the Dutch wanted, or as long as they did not know or care. In any conflict which involved crucial colonial interests, and not just BB egos, the Indonesian was always the loser. Nonetheless, the *Bupati* remained formidable.

Despite a shrinking power base and despite alienation from the intelligentsia, it could be argued that by the mid-thirties the Regents, at least potentially, were stronger than they had been since the nineteenth century. They continued to enjoy the perquisites of high birth and Batavia's support. Increasing numbers also belonged to the generation which had benefited from reforms and hence were better equipped to meet the demands of the increasingly interventionist government. They had, of course, lost their unchallenged pre-eminence in Javanese society, that was irrevocable, destroyed by decades of change. But the Regents of the 'thirties and early 'forties – older, with more experience and training than their predecessors – were better able to cope with changing circumstances than the early twentieth century *Bupati*.

For all their shortcomings, the 1925 reforms and Regency Councils did allow greater freedom and some of the younger generation took advantage of this. Many *Bupati* remained ineffectual; they were handicapped by inadequate education (the average Regent had, at most, the equivalent of a high school training), BB obstructionism, and their own insecurity and lack of interest. Such men tended to turn their backs on the future and to concentrate on the past or the undemanding pleasures and routine of the present. But the energetic and confident minority welcomed new challenges. For these men the office of Regent offered both satisfaction and, within limits, power.

To many of their subordinates in the *Pangreh Praja* the existence of a few able *Bupati* did not justify the hereditary principle, which hindered talented commoners from reaching the top, while smoothing the path of noble incompetents. The reforms of 1910-1915 had not only produced better *Bupati* but also lesser ranking officials with similar training. Each improvement in the schools produced a wave of officials with higher qualifications than those before them, and as there was a natural time-lag before they reached top positions, they were forced to serve years under less educated men. This situation would breed frustration in any organization, but it tended to be especially acute when education was so closely linked to values, attitudes and life-style. The younger men not only often felt more competent than many of their superiors, but also tended to have a different, more Western outlook; they placed more value on concepts such as democracy, and they stressed expertise.

Their frustration was intensified by the bias against those of humble birth. Because of their commitment to an aristocratic *Pangreh Praja* the Dutch filtered out the less well-born as they ascended the administrative hierarchy.

The selection process for the *Bestuurschool* was used as a sieve, Regents' sons were pushed up while others were held back, and there was the final barrier of the hereditary principle itself.

To the discontented within the *Pangreh Praja* it seemed that the government, with conscious hypocrisy, was pursuing a policy of unenlightened self-interest. There was a considerable gap between Dutch theory and practice. Batavia claimed to protect the ancient rights of Regents, but when its own interests were involved, it appointed *Bupati* who did not meet its criteria and set aside those who incurred its displeasure. In 1930, for example, there was the controversial appointment of 'an able Christian' as Regent in Probolinggo, RT Poedjo (1930-43). In 1936 the government dismissed the popular Regent of Tegal (RMT Soesmono Reksoharsono alias Reksonegoro XI, 1929-36) even though he was from a respected local dynasty and had committed no breach of regulations. He had, however, grievously offended European colonial mores by becoming involved with a Dutch woman, hence he was removed from office.

In each case there was protest. The local Dutch press called Poedjo's appointment a grave tactical error, while the people of Tegal petitioned in support of their Regent. The protests were ignored and the local administrations functioned smoothly, complete with new *Bupati*. This in itself seemed to support those opponents of the hereditary principle who argued that popular involvement with the Regents was not as strong as fervent advocates of the *volkshoofd* idea believed.

Both the Tegal and Probolinggo affairs underlined the increasing artificiality of the rigid distinction between 'hereditary traditional *priyayi*' and 'modern European' corps. Dutch education, administrative reform, union development and the influence of nationalist sentiments resulted in a somewhat more equal inter-corps relationship. This was only to be expected, as native familiarity with Dutch language, administration, social and political styles enabled Indonesian-European intercourse to proceed more freely. This greater familiarity may also have reduced the Netherlands' aura of authority, so encouraging feelings of equality and possibly resentment within the *Pangreh Praja*.

Sometimes, too, the Regents' dignity suffered as a result of twentieth-century informality and relative accessibility. The Indies press had a well-developed instinct for sensationalism and the *Bupati* were not exempt from its attentions. As was noted above, the early thirties produced a flurry of gossip concerning the Regents' handling of local finances, while several years later a considerable scandal broke when the *Bupati* of Bojonegoro was brought to trial on charges of fraud, the first Regent ever to appear in such a criminal case.

It had always been government policy to avoid publicizing *Bupati*'s failings, in the belief that their prestige would suffer more from a trial than from discreet premature retirement. But, mainly because of evidence suggesting BB connivance, the Bojonegoro case had become an open scandal. It was not possible to shield the Regent and he was brought to court in late 1938, his

fallibility exposed like that of lesser men. This was a break with past practice, and *Bupati* were served notice that one of their old unwritten privileges was no longer sacrosanct. Although some conservatives deplored this humiliation of a *volkshoofd,* to others it must have seemed a welcome but belated extension of the law, a long overdue limitation on the Regents' licence.[6]

During the early 1930s there was growing tension in the administrative world. Colonial strategy and received dogma still locked together incompatible elements and tried to force them into predetermined moulds. Reactionaries were pleased with *taakverdeeling* and government commitment to the hereditary principle, but disturbed by the decline in both aristocratic form and content within the native civil service: too many commoners, too little *hormat.* On the other hand, progressive officials chafed under that restrictive authoritarianism which prevented them pursuing their goal of an efficient, democratic and racially egalitarian bureaucracy. Well-educated *priyayi* resented, as they had for decades, the prejudice and condescension they encountered. The extent of disillusionment is hard to gauge. Most officials remained silent, reluctant to say anything which might jeopardize their careers, and many were satisfied with their lot, or at least accepted it. Only the articulate and committed few left their opinions on record in journals and *Volksraad* reports, and among them disillusionment was clearly evident.

Not all rank-and-file members of *priyayi* organizations necessarily shared their leaders' disillusionment. Many PPBB members supported Soetardjo, for example, not because they accepted his political ideas but because they believed him to be an effective negotiator over pay and promotion procedures. Moreover, PPBB branches differed from each other, and in some cases they heeded local BB preferences more than they did the policies of their own central office.

Soetardjo was aware that he only received partial backing from native officials, which was one reason he did not push for an uncompromising program such as that of Vaib. He also understood that for many officials the appeal of progressive programs was limited by what he called their 'slave mentality', induced by the colonial situation and Javanese hierarchy. It was not enough that the unions simply try to win more equitable conditions, it was also essential that they help native officials free themselves of their crippling anxieties and sense of inferiority. Soetardjo feared that even if *priyayi* were given the right to appeal against their superiors, they might not do so; fear of jeopardizing their promotion chances or risking rebuke would keep them silent. He tried to impart a sense of pride to *Pangreh Praja* members, exhorting them to embark on 'self improvement', to avoid the heedless selfishness of the 'hunt for promotions' and to think instead of the common good.

[6] On Tegal *IPO* 1936, pp. 220-1; on Poedjo i.a. 'Een Christen Regent', *Timboel,* 4 (1930) pp. 200-1, and Sutherland, 'Pangreh Pradja', p. 496 note 90; on Bojonegoro mr. 219^{x}/39, 866^{x}/37, 1034^{x}/39.

Soetardjo urged government *priyayi* to be confident, to unite and make full use of the political opportunities allowed them. A strong *Pangreh Praja* should work to keep the Dutch to promises they had made, as in *ontvoogding* and the administrative reform law. His tactics recognized the need for pressure, while his speeches had a sharp biting edge, born of his belief that the regime (always promising reform) and the BB (who so understood the natives) were in fact destroying his colleagues.

After 1935 the political and economic climate was more favourable to determined *Pangreh Praja* action and the gap between the nationalists and the most activist officials' leaders, notably Soetardjo, began to narrow. Most political leaders and native officials came from the same social strata and there had always been personal and family ties between them. Although conservative *priyayi*, most BB, and finally the government opposed any alliance between *Pangreh Praja* and nationalists, covert sympathy for the latter was growing among younger officials. Moreover, during the early thirties Dutch repression (including the exile of such radical leaders as Sukarno, Hatta and Sjahrir) forced the nationalists to adopt more moderate tactics. More and more parties abandoned non-co-operation and entered councils; this increased communication and their common ground with the *Pangreh Praja*. The convergence between certain streams of opinion within both the parties and the civil service grew as education and frustration heightened the officials' political consciousness and Dutch action pruned away the more extreme political groups. But beyond this moderate centre much jealousy and suspicion remained between politicians and government *priyayi*, particularly at the local level.

The formation of the *Parindra* party in late 1935 provided a framework for the centre stream of the politically involved. Many moderate *priyayi* nationalists found its Javanism attractive and reform programs sensible; some native officials joined on retirement. Around the same time an easing of the economic situation enabled *Pangreh Praja* unions to pick up lost strength and their leaders to look beyond bread-and-butter issues. Of the three major movements speaking for the government *priyayi* – PPBB, Vaib and the Regents' Association – the PPBB was closest to the nationalist movement. In the first issue of *Pemimpin* in 1929 Soetardjo urged all officials to make full political use of the councils, even though they might be called 'red' by the government, and 'traitors' by radical nationalists. His contention that native officials had political as well as administrative responsibilities was denied by conservatives who regarded him as extremely 'left' and over-friendly with nationalists. In July 1936 Soetardjo stepped directly into the political arena when he petitioned the *Volksraad* to call for a conference to discuss the relationship between the Netherlands and the Indies. He himself suggested a ten year period of preparation culminating in Indies autonomy; among necessary preliminaries were the abolition of dualism in the civil service and the *Volksraad*'s conversion into a representative and responsible parliament. This petition was a natural extension

of his struggle as a *Pangreh Praja* reformer, as it was Batavia's indifference to his earlier suggestions of reform that led him to the analysis which underlay the petition.

When Soetardjo presented his motion in the *Volksraad* he described the native communities' distrust of the government and the bitterness within the civil service caused by retrenchment policies. As a leader of the native officials he felt he had some claim to represent Indonesian interests, as given Dutch non-acceptance of the nationalists it was the *Pangreh Praja* that linked people and government, both as council deputies and as officials *per se*. But Soetardjo went beyond recognition of this obvious connection and was sensitive to the divergence. This awareness that the *Pangreh Praja,* too, was part of the disadvantageous 'native' category was shared by other officials, particularly the younger, better-educated. Whereas some groups, such as Vaib, focused upon the need to purify the corps from 'feudal' elements, others, like Soetardjo, were convinced that the essential cause of their grievances was the colonial relationship itself.

Soetardjo's awareness of the colonial tie and its effects, and his use of the *Volksraad,* the PPBB and journals mark him out as the dominant political figure of the late colonial *Pangreh Praja.* He was, in fact, a national figure, and one well qualified to play a central role. His relationships with moderate Europeans and nationalists were good, while his administrative experience gave him an understanding of how government actually worked. It had also provided valuable training in the art of speaking two languages, of mediating between Dutch and Indonesians, and connecting different ways of thinking. He had mastered the parliamentary game, and his concentration on using the *Volksraad* rather than aiming at mass support reflects his diagnosis of the colonial political system. The regime had written the rules, they had made many promises. Soetardjo hoped, by playing their game, to use their own rules and so force them into concessions. It is a sad comment on both the colonial government and the nationalist movement that neither moved to meet him half-way.

The Dutch authorities were in no hurry to answer his 1936 petition; for over two years there was no answer, for they simply did not take it seriously. Although some European officials urged that steps be taken to reassure the natives and Adviser Gobée recommended Indonesianization of the civil service, Batavia chose to heed conservative advice from De Kat Angelino and the Council of the Indies, who believed nothing need be done. The petition was finally rejected in November 1938. Meanwhile, the nationalist organizations showed little enthusiasm for Soetardjo's ideas; and many resented this encroachment on their political territory. Within the administration Soetardjo had also to face the charge that he was involving the PPBB in politics. He replied that the PPBB *was* political and should act accordingly; its *Volksraad* representatives had to speak freely, and not be afraid because they were officials, otherwise they could not fulfil their duties as PPBB representatives.

As the thirties advanced, Soetardjo made increasing use of nationalist-style rhetoric, urging the officials to remember their past under the old kings, when no one doubted their capabilities. He said that it was European interference that had reduced the *Pangreh Praja* to 'inanimate and will-less machinery'. He described the officials' history since the foundation of the Regents' Association and the OOB as a struggle to rise from degradation. The officials must remember, wrote Soetardjo, that they were free men, natives of a country with a glorious tradition, and they should be true to their PPBB flag, with its white for purity and black for steadfastness.

This increasingly political approach grew from Soetardjo's awareness that the lot of the native officials was inextricably bound up with the total colonial situation. He knew that the corps, in his own words, 'occupied a position which was one hundred per cent political, that is, a colonial political position' and so could only advance through political change. The position of the *Pangreh Praja* was inseparable from that of the Indonesians as a whole, as its status derived from its relationship with the people. It followed from Soetardjo's analysis that improvement in the officials' circumstances would only come when the Dutch conceded that the Indonesians as a whole could advance. Consequently, piecemeal amelioration of glaring abuses was useless; what was needed was structural change in the colonial relationship, hence the Soetardjo petition. Once this was refused, bitter disillusionment with colonial promises was inevitable, and this was the case with Soetardjo.[7]

Despite the continuing erosion of *priyayi* support Batavia remained convinced that change within Javanese society was superficial and hence that no reassessment of the colonial relationship was necessary. The essentially negative thrust of post-1927 policy continued, and so too did the polarization between Dutch and Indonesian communities. Within the nationalist movement this was reflected in a greater emphasis on solidarity.

After the rather numb years of the depression and police action in the early thirties, the main parties – notably *Parindra* and the somewhat left *Gerindo* (1937) – began to show more life and a trend towards unification during the late thirties. This was not only manifest in the formation of the federation *Gapi* (1939), but also in the growing political awareness of the Muslim movements which had formed their own federation in 1937. This new activism, based partly on economic revival and partly on the hope that the tense international situation would force concessions from the Dutch, resulted in National Congresses in 1939 and 1940 which demanded an Indonesian parliament. Then in September 1941, a further step towards solidarity was taken with the formation of the Indonesian People's Council, which not only included *Gapi* and the Muslim federation but also the PVPN union of government civil servants. But

[7] Abeyasekere, *passim*; Soetardjo's editorials in *Pemimpin*, particularly 10, i (1938); 1, i (1929); 11, vi (1939); 11, viii (1940).

by this stage Indonesian hopes that the Netherlands would move to meet their requests had already turned sour, as it was obvious the regime had no such intentions.

Despite the occupation of the Netherlands in May 1940 and the Japanese threat in the Pacific, the colonial authorities remained sanguine. The Dutch government-in-exile in London stated that no constitutional change was possible since the people of the German-occupied Netherlands could not be consulted. More fundamentally, Batavia held that the demand for a parliament could not be taken seriously. Such Western institutions were quite unsuited to the Indies and the nationalist movement itself was, in any case, peripheral to native society. It was believed that most natives were devoted to traditional leaders and loyal to the Netherlands. In short, the apparently dramatic changes which had taken place had caused no shift in colonial thinking.

According to the regime, Java was equipped with all institutions necessary to guarantee a peaceful continuance of Dutch rule. Regency Councils were the natural channels for Indonesian political aspirations. In 1939 Minister Welter was pleased to note some increase in popular interest in the Councils, but felt they were still quite adequate in their present form, although he did permit some expansion of the more European Provincial Councils' powers in the direction of responsible government. On the whole, Welter's attitude was paternalistic, and in his anxiety to protect the people from abuse he was more than willing to curtail the freedom of their so-called leaders – as he himself might have phrased it.[8]

Attitudes towards the *Pangreh Praja,* its place in the administration, and its relationships with the BB also changed little. In 1940 a highly placed Dutch official praised the dual hierarchy for its efficient division of labour: the Orientals brought local knowledge to their work, while the academically trained BB stood above parochial concerns; beneficient supervisors linking the native to the modern world. Although regulations did limit BB power, he believed that as long as the European officials maintained a low profile and worked through personal contacts, they were in a strong controlling position. This he attributed to the fact that their real status in local society had changed far less than it had on paper.

One aspect of the European corps which this observer found rather disturbing was its low morale and quality. Many officials were either simple, stupid, lazy, disillusioned or consumed by ambition. A major cause of this disquieting situation was the central government's lack of appreciation of the BB, particularly in Java. The corps' power had also suffered the effects of years of erosion by other Departments, and it had lost the freedom and responsibility retained by officials in the Outer Islands. But he still believed

[8] Abeyasekere, *passim*; letter from Minister Welter in Van der Wal, *Volksraad,* vol. II, pp. 455-61.

that with better pay and more sympathetic treatment the BB could continue to operate the dual system as admirably as it had in the past. What signs there were of disillusionment among the natives were, he thought, of little significance.

In a similar account the ex-BB leader J.W. Meyer Ranneft praised the BB as an Olympian corps of guardians. He maintained that all that was needed was a revival of the old sense of mission, and felt the best way to achieve this was by borrowing some of the techniques then in favour in Germany to build up a Prussian-style governing elite, self-sufficient and confident.[9]

Although the two men were spokesmen from the more conservative BB, there is no reason to assume that they were atypical in their values. They were probably all too representative of high-level government thinking which saw BB discouragement, lassitude and occasional corruption as signs of individual moral weakness, or of the declining calibre of the men recruited, rather than as indications that Java's administration was based on false premises and beginning to take its toll within the BB as well as the *Pangreh Praja*.

When Soetardjo looked back over ten years of PPBB existence, from 1929 to 1939, he saw some changes in the attitudes of the officials themselves: a greater sense of purpose, and also some government acknowledgement of the corps' importance. But there were few concrete achievements, and there were still powerful forces opposing *Pangreh Praja* emancipation as well as continuing demands from conservatives that reforms be reversed. Soetardjo only felt able to claim partial success in reducing *hormat*, in winning higher education (notably one tertiary level *Bestuursacademie*, 1938), and in consolidating the *priyayi*'s legal position. He attributed these poor results mainly to the opposition of Soeria Nata Atmadja of the Regents' Association and Hermen Kartowisastro of Vaib. He accused them of sabotaging the PPBB campaign, although their organizations also claimed credit for the same advances.[10]

If these gains are compared with the PPBB aims outlined at its formation in 1929, or even with the hopes Soetardjo expressed in 1919, then it is clear that real legal progress was minimal. Dutch theory remained wedded to the *volkshoofd* idea. But in social and practical terms considerable change had occurred; the predominance of more educated officials forced some grudging and informal BB and government recognition of their new capabilities.

The post-1927 period was difficult for the native officials; there were none of the dramatic reforms which had punctuated the preceding twenty-odd years, but instead an atmosphere of uncertainty and frustration. The government's belief that enough had already been changed in Java to justify a period of inactivity seemed to many *Pangreh Praja* leaders to be merely a mask for reaction. Their increasingly activist tone, displayed in its most extreme form

[9] Letter in Meyer Ranneft collection, no. 29; Meyer Ranneft, 'Om den Geest van het BB'.

[10] Soetardjo, editorials in *Pemimpin*, 10, x (1939) and in 1940; Vaib's views appear in the 'Korte Schets'.

by Soetardjo, reflected a growing conviction that reform must be won, not merely requested. Conservative Dutch politicians were persuaded that the more radical *Pangreh Praja* spokesmen were a small group alienated from the great majority of government *priyayi*, while the activist officials themselves contended that it was the colonial authorities who were dangerously out of touch with reality.

The gap between the more radical officials and Batavia widened during the early forties. In July 1940 Soetardjo announced to the *Volksraad* that the so-called PPBB group would henceforth be known as the *Indonesische Midden Groep* (Indonesian Centre Group). The old name had been misleading, as members were not all PPBB men, nor did they represent the union or officialdom but rather their electorates. This change was a further indication that the faction was a political group like any other, representing not the officials *per se* but moderate Indonesian political opinion.

Both the colonial regime and some *Pangreh Praja* members were far from happy with this politicization. Soetardjo himself was summoned several times by high-ranking Dutch officials and advised to moderate his behaviour; he was offered promotion if he followed this advice and warned of possible repercussions should he choose to ignore it. Then in mid-1941 there was a crisis in the PPBB itself when the Dutch DIA Director forced the resignation of the entire executive because Soetardjo's political activities were unacceptable; a new leadership was formed under Wiranatakusuma. But Soetardjo weathered the crisis and continued to exercise unofficial leadership over the PPBB.[11]

The more independent and outspoken native officials were no longer content to bow to the restrictions imposed upon them by the Dutch. Dissatisfaction was overt and the solutions sought were increasingly political. This is not to say that all native officials were nationalists at heart. Despite their education, many retained their traditional orientation and ignored or opposed new currents in Javanese society and politics. But among the younger men in particular new ideas had taken root and for them the trappings, style and many of the functions of the old colonial *Pangreh Praja* amounted to little more than a charade and a betrayal of their own traditions and their duty to the people.

[11] Sewaka, *Tjorat-Tjaret dari Djaman ke Djaman* (Bandung, 1955) pp. 59-60; *Pemimpin*, 6, xi (1939) and *passim*.

CHAPTER 11
THE COLONIAL LEGACY AND JAVA'S RURAL CIVIL SERVICE, 1942 – 1975

It has been said that the native civil service of nineteenth century Java underwent intensive bureaucratization, that it became mechanized and routinized while its social function was defeudalized and secularized. To varying degrees all these somewhat alarmingly named processes did occur, but they were far from complete, even by the end of the colonial period. Although it might seem that there had been an inexorable march of progress, with administrative structures and practice becoming increasingly systematic, in reality much old wine remained to fill apparently new bottles.

Organizational charts do not always reflect actual circumstances. Value patterns and personal relationships may so animate a formal framework that the resulting system's dominant ethos and mode of operation deviate from the official blueprint. Unusual and even dubious methods of connecting an institution with local society may be indispensible if either is to make sense of the other. On the fringes of the Indies legal world, for example, the raffish *pokral bambu* has interpreted Dutch law to Javanese peasants for well over a hundred years, and native officials also had their informal and sometimes illicit networks of informants, their links with violent *jago*. Similarly, the villagers themselves made use of insiders, men with contacts and experience who could manipulate the esoteric bureaucracy or, at least, translate common men's petitions into appropriate language.

When the evolution of Dutch economic and political interests called forth new colonial policies, reformers made the necessary administrative adjustments. Initially, these were restricted to efforts to standardize and centralize the general structure, but then attention turned to improving the efficiency of the men who staffed it. In the later 19th century minimal schooling was provided for a small section of the native elite, but reform gathered momentum with further advances in education and some rationalization of appointment and promotion procedures after 1910. These measures, part of an overall trend towards bureaucratization, were subsequently consolidated in a series of decisions improving schools and refining the career structure.

Pangreh Praja reorganization was a complex, painful and partial process. Not simply a matter of expanding education or altering office procedures, it also encompassed the redefinition of a class and its values. Changing administrative and social realities demanded flexibility, but both colonial dogma and indigenous conservatism prevented any comprehensive reassessment of the native corps' role.

According to the Dutch diagnosis, the indigenous civil service's unique usefulness derived from its traditional status, which the colonial regime hoped to maintain by the strict preservation of presumably crucial social traits. But

despite their desire to manipulate local political structures the government failed to allow for any growth or dynamism within them, leaving no space for internal responses to work themselves out. As long as the system remained much the same as when the Dutch first took control, friction was easily contained; but by the 20th century, when many Indonesian communities hungered for progress, the Netherlands was still supporting the so-called traditional chiefs, the main forces of reaction.

By then it was no longer simply a matter of allowing established political structures to persist: they had to be actively defended, and so the theoretically apolitical *Beamtenstaat* became a protective scaffolding supporting indigenous authority. Paradoxically, this imprisoned the *Pangreh Praja,* inhibited its responses and so further weakened a corps already suffering from the contempt of many of its defenders as well as the challenge of new elites. Ultimately, maintenance of the status quo necessitated the development of a police regime, crushing all open opposition. The colonial government sought to shore up the *priyayi* against the eroding effects of 'defeudalization', a misnomer for their changing position and declining prestige. But in their equating of traditional prerogatives with popular esteem the Dutch did the native officials a disservice, for they forced the corps into stagnation.

Although the native officials did in fact retain considerable authority, their base of support was contracting. Western education was a major force swinging the corps further into the European sphere, so increasing nationalist distrust of officials, while heightened Muslim self-consciousness fortified traditional *santri* suspicions of the colonial *priyayi.* Dutch policy separated the *Pangreh Praja* from the most vital sources of growth in indigenous society, as both modern political initiatives and Islamic reformism were seen as threats to the regime.

Gradually, the native civil service began to lose its pre-emptive right to be regarded as the sole voice of the people and, at the same time, significant numbers of men began to achieve *priyayi* status outside the context of the native corps. Competition for social and political leadership weakened the *Pangreh Praja*'s claim to unquestioning obedience and deference. Moreover, below elite level, many ordinary people began to doubt the native officials' effectiveness as their advisors, protectors and representatives. And so the nationalist movement found both leaders and followers.

The rise of political parties and the development of reformist pressure groups within the *Pangreh Praja* were related phenomena, created by the growing dissatisfaction of new, often education-based elites with the status quo. Until the Ethical tide began to ebb around the end of World War I it seemed as if these groups would receive a sympathetic hearing in Batavia, at least from the Governor General if not from most of his officials. But the subsequent decade, with its hardening of colonial opinion, saw the informal supra-Regency *Pangreh Praja* leadership of progressive *Bupati* forced into ever shallower political channels. They, and the other native officials, found their range of options

narrowed and were increasingly isolated. Nevertheless, new patterns did begin to emerge in the late twenties and thirties.

More and more government *priyayi* were mastering the social and political style and methods of their Dutch superiors. Not only were there native officials who felt at home in the semi-democratic routine of local councils and the *Volksraad* and were able to use these institutions for their own benefit, but there were also increasing numbers of educated *Pangreh Praja* men fully in command of the bureaucratic game. These symptoms of native control over European political techniques did not fit the theory of the colonial Javanese polity as propounded by such ideologues as De Kat Angelino and Colijn. Technocratic attitudes, the use of institutionalized lobbying methods and a covert but probably growing affinity for nationalist thinking conflicted with the *volkshoofd* image, which remained a central element in the Dutch conception of the *Pangreh Praja*'s role.

The function of the native corps extended far beyond the businesslike work of supervising, organizing and collecting information or products. They had also to transmit ideas and images. The role of the *Pangreh Praja* was to communicate with both indigenous and alien spheres; this was a two-way process and communication was not restricted to facts but also involved the public affirmation of certain political motifs. It has been suggested that the traditional Javanese state existed less to govern than to stage 'sacred pageants' displaying dominant cultural themes;[1] in their own way the Dutch too seemed to believe that the conventionalized enactment of political tableaux could, in the native context, substitute for hard reality. Their efforts to maintain the Regent-as-*volkshoofd* was based on such thinking: by protecting and publicizing the *Bupati*'s perquisites and special status they hoped to confirm his authority over the people. Although the Regent embodied this *volkshoofd* idea in an especially intense form, there was a general belief among colonial authorities that popular respect for the native officials, that safeguard of the Netherlands' presence in Java, could best be retained by keeping the corps 'traditional'.

Underlying this attitude was a particular faith in the authority of the government *priyayi*, a conviction that the mass of the people were loyal to the *Pangreh Praja* and hence to the government it served. On this basis the Dutch arranged their strategy to enable the indigenous officials to dominate the native sphere. Although the creation of local councils and *Volksraad* was intended to allow more direct popular participation in government, in practice these councils were strongly influenced by the administration's *priyayi*. Also, the colonial authorities themselves never really conceded the nationalists a share in the Dutch-Indonesian dialogue. They were regarded as extraneous and pushed to one side. This was easily done, as although many nationalists shared the same

[1] C. Geertz, *Islam Observed: Religious Development in Morocco and Indonesia* (New Haven, 1968) pp. 35-9 on the 'Theatre State'.

priyayi background as the *Pangreh Praja*, their very ideas marked them as déraciné, and so disqualified them from any right to represent the peasants. The main channels for communication between governed and governing continued to be the native officials who were, after all, the 'natural chiefs of the people'.

This view of the *Pangreh Praja*'s political function was based on the assumption that the people were loyal to the officials and the officials were loyal to the Dutch. The term loyalty can cover a wide spectrum of commitment, ranging from an active and passionate involvement to a mute acceptance of the status quo: in the absence of defiance or rebellion, the people are thought to be 'loyal'. Many Netherlands' officials seem to have taken a surprisingly sentimental view of the colonial relationship, believing that they – or at least their *priyayi* – had a positive hold on popular affections although in many cases this conviction co-existed with a distrust of natives. High-ranking Dutchmen thought that the masses would rise to defend the state should the Japanese invade the Indies or, at the very least, that the population would refuse to co-operate. In this they were mistaken: the people welcomed the Japanese, and with a few exceptions, most of whom were killed, the native officials soon settled down to work under their new masters.

Popular attitudes towards the *priyayi* had never been free of suspicion and, in some cases, fear and hatred. The idea that they were the loved and revered fathers of the people was as simplistic as Multatuli's image of noble peasants suffering under the tyranny of cruel and rapacious chiefs. Native officials were often seen as extortionate tax gatherers, as police agents of foreign masters, or as irritating know-alls insisting on new ways of farming or house-building. With their sharpening perception of Dutch use of the native corps, *santri* and intelligentsia alike expressed more overt hostility to the government *priyayi*, channeling and sometimes deliberately mobilizing peasant resentment. In many areas individual native officials still had a considerable hold over the people and enjoyed their unforced deference, but this was not automatic. The Dutch, in their evaluations of *Pangreh Praja* status, made far too rigid a connection between *priyayi* authority and high birth.

Noble origins and style were great advantages for an official and local dynasties could command special allegiance, but in the final analysis rank, personality and ability were also of very great importance. The relative significance of these factors varied from place to place: a Christian commoner like Poedjo was a dynamic *Bupati* in Probolinggo, but would have been a disaster in strongly Islamic Banten or the aristocratic Priangan. Whereas an able bureaucrat might make an excellent city Regent, he could fail completely in a rural area where a sympathetic ear and fine bearing would be greater assets. For above all, the colonial authorities underrated 'the charisma of office', the institutionalization of expectations of compliance which led the people to

obey the native officials even though the latter had very few obvious sanctions with which to enforce their commands.[2] In their elaborate theories of the *volkshoofd* and *priyayi* authority the Dutch isolated birth as the crucial element and failed to appreciate prestige of office and sheer force of personality. Nor did they understand – or accept – that social change and administrative reform had knocked down many of the mundane props which supported the officials' high status. With their power over the people curtailed and their freedom to allocate patronage hedged in by new regulations, many *priyayi* manipulative techniques were ineffectual.

Despite evidence of change Batavia continued to see the native officials as their chief bulwark against extremism. It did not seem incongruous to De Kat Angelino, for example, to talk of the *Pangreh Praja*'s 'natural' hold over the people while advocating strong police measures to protect this presumably revered elite. He sustained his analysis by disregarding all groups which denied the government *priyayi*'s legitimacy. This gave admirable consistency to his views (which influenced policy-makers such as Welter and Colijn) but it also made them more myth than reality. While he was right in regarding the mass of the people as controllable by the *Pangreh Praja,* he misjudged the importance of the politicized minority and the extent to which their ideas attracted many moderate Indonesians, including officials. So while Dutch attention focused on the political theatre of the *Bupati-as-volkshoofd,* as a legitimation of the colonial regime, more significant developments were in fact occurring elsewhere. Indeed, sometimes it seems that the Dutch mystified themselves more effectively than they did the peasantry, being so engrossed in their *priyayi* performance that they failed to examine critically the bases of *Pangreh Praja* authority and social status. The colonial *volkshoofden* moved in an atmosphere typical of what Taufik Abdullah has called a 'schakel society' a world of pretence that created its own realities which superimposed themselves on the separated realities of both the ruled and the ruler.[3]

For the officials themselves twentieth century developments presented a perplexing series of challenges. Decades of economic, social and administrative change had greatly increased the number of variables in almost all situations. They had still, as always, to adjust their behaviour and professional performance to suit the relative strengths and preferences of local interests, but these interests spanned a far wider range than before. After 1900 the native corps not only had to reckon with the biases of superiors and the attitudes of village leaders and religious teachers, but had also to take into account the possible reactions of other government departments, and of Dutch and native journalists and

[2] D.R. Fagg, 'Authority and Social Structure: a study in Javanese bureaucracy, being the consideration of Relations between the Exercise of Authority in a Sub-District Office and the Social Structure of a Javanese Town' (Ph.D. Thesis, Harvard University, 1958).

[3] T. Abdullah, 'The making of a schakel society: the Minangkabau region in the late 19th century', *Majalah Ilmu Ilmu Sastra Indonesia,* 6, iii (1976) pp. 13-29.

politicians. Such new elements did not simply constitute a quantitative complication of the *Pangreh Praja's* milieu, but reflected a qualitative alteration in their relations with each other, the BB and Indies society as a whole.

Response to these changing patterns varied. Some native officials clung to the *priyayi* ethic and the established values of their corps, perhaps because of a real belief in the continuing validity of the *kawula-gusti* relationship, perhaps also because they recognized that this ethic was the basis of their own privileged status. For the less educated or more traditionalist officials conservatism may well have seemed the most effective way of both governing and of preserving their own elite position. Within this group there were many shades of opinion, ranging from those with a deep admiration for the Dutch to those who resented their 'red-faced' foreign masters. They disliked and probably feared the upstart leaders of the nationalist movement. By 1942 the out-and-out traditionalists were very much a shrinking minority, as most officials had had some Dutch education at least. Nevertheless, the influence of the *priyayi* ethic was still strong although often blended with suitably 'modern' attitudes.

There were also officials who had adopted Dutch manners and opinions in a more wholehearted fashion. Usually such men had received a fairly high education in European schools and were often alienated from both the indigenous and *mestizo* traditions of the old *Pangreh Praja* and from the villagers they governed, (although they might have a sentimental regard for peasants and respect for *adat* law, both studied in Dutch textbooks). Some such *priyayi* became keen bureaucratic professionals, anxious to purge the corps of embarrassing remnants of native feudalism. Politically this group also spanned the continuum from admirers of the regime, through neutral, to the more radical who sympathized with political leaders.

The extent of Westernization in the native corps was closely linked to the intensification of Dutch training but, given the nature of available sources and the ability of most officials to present themselves in various roles, it is impossible to measure changes in attitudes or values. Certain behaviour was appropriate for the *alun-alun* or *pendopo*; different modes suited the club and the office. The playing of diverse roles could be sustained without undue effort as long as reasonable rapport existed between audience and players, even though both might be aware that the action was following a pre-arranged script. The problem for the *Pangreh Praja* in twentieth-century Java was that this rapport faltered, so that a certain falsity and remoteness from reality began to emerge.

Politicization of the native officials increased during the twenties and thirties. Disillusionment with the colonial authorities was linked both to their political obduracy and their reluctance to make fundamental administrative reforms in the *Pangreh Praja.* This loss of faith was particularly strong among the able middle-ranking officials of non-Regent birth, the 'Young Colonels' of the corps. The extent to which their superiors, the *Bupati,* had trouble

reconciling their roles of official and political *volkshoofd* is uncertain. Many may not have found the situation too taxing, especially if their educational background was strong enough to enable them to meet the demands of both office and Council chamber. Those who could move confidently within each probably felt able to perform effectively in all spheres, each source of authority reinforcing the others. But in lower echelons resentment of the Regents' privileges made the lesser officials receptive to nationalist demands for a less closed society, even though most would no doubt have opposed any real reduction in their own status. And as both BB and *Pangreh Praja* came to be recruited from less restricted social strata, the identification of the civil services with a ruling caste was increasingly forced.

Pangreh Praja development from the late nineteenth century to the Japanese occupation was marked by the complex interaction of a number of closely related processes, of various ideas and realities. Some Dutchmen held to the abstract conception of a benevolent, paternalist, colonial state administered for the mutual benefit of the indigenous people and the Netherlands by a native aristocracy watched over by altruistic European guardians. The Javanese elite had their own idealized images of the *priyayi*, the classic formula of '*sepi ing pamrih, rame ing gawe, mengayu-ayuning buwana*' (be disinterested, work hard, to perfect the world). But there were also less edifying attitudes: European contempt for the *vuile Inlander* (dirty native), and a distrust of Javanese officials whom some regarded as devious, parasitic and self-seeking. Within the *Pangreh Praja* itself, there were those who despised the villagers they exploited rather than served, who hated and feared the new elites which challenged their hegemony.

The noble views were rarely realized in practice, the most extreme prejudices seldom allowed free rein. But although reality was more subtly shaded, it was often influenced by stereotypic thinking, and shaped both by indigenous political traditions and the long history of mutual competition, manipulation and accommodation between native and European local chiefs. It is only against this background that such apparently restricted issues as the abolition of the *magang* system, the introduction of *ontvoogding*, the campaign against extreme *hormat*, or Dutch defence of the hereditary principle can be seen in their true perspective.

Conflicts over these and similar questions did not merely reflect disagreement between conservatives and reformers within the administration. They also expressed the continuing contest between BB and *Pangreh Praja* for local authority, the more recent struggle between progressive and traditionalist native officials, and were also inextricably linked to the *priyayi* response to social modernization and politicization. For the native officials cannot be isolated from their society; growing differentiation, changing attitudes and new tensions in the wider society had their repercussions and parallels within the corps.

During the late colonial period the native officials, within the confines of their traditional role and colonial function, did their best to come to terms with a changing world. The fact that they seemed to please no one can be attributed more to the difficulties of playing a mediating role in a polarizing situation than to an overall failure on their part.

But despite inevitable problems, up until 1942 the native officials did at least have the advantage of knowing precisely where they stood: they had to be beside the Dutch and unequivocally against all critics of the regime. But when World War II brought the Japanese to occupy Java in March 1942 the political game changed abruptly. Whereas before there had been, officially, two opposing camps, the Japanese admitted new players to positions of influence, recognizing nationalist and Muslim leaders as legitimate links between Jakarta (the former Batavia) and the people. The government *priyayi's* opponents were now raised up and acknowledged – indeed, during the early years of the occupation the new rulers strongly favoured political and religious leaders over the *Pangreh Praja.*

The Japanese, of necessity, maintained the essential structure of the corps. Although provinces and governors were abolished, the backbone of residency (*shū*, under Japanese officials), regency (*ken*), district (*gun*) and subdistrict (*son*) remained under the supervision of the interior affairs department (*Naimubu*) in Jakarta, which was in turn responsible to the ruling Sixteenth Army administration.[4] But the privileged position of the officials was sharply reduced – maximum salaries were cut to less than half, the hereditary principle was abolished and, in the course of the occupation, assorted powers were lost: over police, over religious affairs, over urban populations. Moreover, the officials were open to public criticism and reproval. As the group most closely identified with the Dutch they were under suspicion, not necessarily of treason (though some paid with their lives for lingering loyalties), but of being too European minded, arrogant, and resistant to new social and political visions. A good Dutch education, once a hallmark of high status, had become a liability; the new regime stressed the Indonesian or Japanese languages, hostility to Europe, and an ability to rouse the people in service of the war effort rather than *ruste en orde.*

Under the Dutch the linchpins of control had been the businesslike bureaucrats, the secret police and, for popular consumption, the paternalist and authoritarian *volkshoofden.* The Japanese strengthened the police and retained the bureaucracy, but for political theatre and mobilization they turned to nationalists and Islamic mass movements. No civil servants were allowed to join *Putera,* the political organization within which resentment of the *Pangreh Praja* flourished, while *Masjumi,* the Muslim movement, successfully competed with

[4] H.J. Benda, J.K. Irikura, K. Kishi (eds.), *Japanese Military Administration in Indonesia* (New Haven, 1965); The Liang Gie, *Pertumbuhan Pemerintahan daerah di Negara Republik Indonesia: suatu analisa tentang masalah-masalah desentralisasi dan tjara-tjara penjelesaiannja,* Vol. II (Jakarta, 1968) pp. 26-28.

native officials for popular influence. The initial isolation of the *Pangreh Praja* from political activity had been marked by the abolition of all local councils, and although *priyayi* were represented in the central and residency advisory councils introduced in late 1943 they did not regain their once dominant position. Then in early 1944 the Japanese decided to build up the corps in order to weaken the nationalists, and replaced *Putera* with the *Djawa Hōkōkai*, a mass organization paralleling the civil service and largely under officials. But even this apparent victory had negative repercussions, underlining *priyayi* identification with Nippon.[5]

This Japanese return to political reliance upon the *Pangreh Praja* reinforced the structural similarities between their military rule and the Netherlands' colonial state. Ethos and style were very different, but the framework was much the same. Both Dutch and Japanese policies were determined far from Java: Batavia/Jakarta itself had little power to settle vital issues, and native officials' involvement with decision-making was minimal. Also, The Hague and Tokyo had no real interest in Indonesian public opinion – as long as productivity continued popular attitudes were irrelevant. The uncompromising quality of both regimes forced the officials to carry out their dual task of administration and political supervision unquestioningly, for under colonial rule and during the occupation's latter years the *Pangreh Praja* was the major guarantor of popular adherance to the masters' political line.

Despite this continuity, the new ethos and the abrupt changes in policy had made government *priyayi* aware of their vulnerability. They were still dependent on the overwhelming power of Jakarta, but Jakarta was no longer predictable, and sometimes turned upon its servants. The officials' birthright to high status was denied, their Dutch expertise suspect, their political role curtailed, their competitors acknowledged. Despite all this, it was business as usual to a surprising degree. There was a rapid turnover of Regents during the occupation years, but the great majority of appointees were drawn from the highest levels of the colonial civil service, mostly *Patih* or transferred *Bupati*, although several town Mayors were made Regents and a couple of rank outsiders also became *Bupati*. Most of the Vice Residents appointed in late 1944 were high *priyayi*, while of the three native Residents two were ex-*Pangreh Praja*: Soetardjo Kartohadikoesoemo in Jakarta, and Soerio, ex-Regent of Magetan (1938-1943) in Bojonegoro. The third non-Japanese Resident, in Kedu, was R. Panji Soeroso, leader of the government employees' union PVPN.

[5] Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun*, pp. 130-7, 162-4 and *passim*; B.R.O'G. Anderson, 'Japan "The light of Asia"' in J. Silverstein (ed.), *Southeast Asia in World War II: Four Essays* (New Haven, 1966) pp. 13-50; B.R.O'G. Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution. Occupation and Resistance 1944-1946* (Ithaca, 1972); Sewaka, pp. 63-79; for examples of Putera hostility, M. Hatta, *The Putera Reports. Problems in Indonesian-Japanese Wartime Cooperation* (Ithaca, 1971); S.M. Gandasubrata, *An Account of the Japanese Occupation of Banjumas Residency, Java, March 1942 to August 1945* (Ithaca, 1953).

Soetardjo and Soeroso were later appointed by the Japanese to the 21 man preparatory committee for Indonesian independence. All in all, it appeared that the *Pangreh Praja* and the Japanese military forces achieved a reasonable *modus vivendi.*[6]

To the more rigorously anti-Japanese this *modus vivendi* was nothing more than craven or self-seeking collaboration. Many Netherlanders were shocked by the apparent ease with which the native corps adjusted to Japanese reality, just as later many Republican nationalists were bitter at *priyayi* readiness to work alongside the returning Dutch. But such reactions hinge on assumptions about loyalty and the legitimacy of given regimes which were not necessarily shared by the *Pangreh Praja.* For those *priyayi* to whom the *volkshoofd* role retained some moral force, loyalty was due not to distant centres – The Hague or Tokyo, or even Batavia, Bandung, Semarang or Surabaya – but to their own people and place. This strong regional commitment meant that duty was seen as an obligation to the regency and to family tradition, and this duty derived its emotional legitimacy from a strong identification between villagers, dynasty and the physical environment. Allegiance was local and personal, not a formal commitment to an abstract state.

Within such a context 'collaboration' was not only sensible in terms of self preservation, but also morally correct. Just as officials based their local policy on the balancing of competing interests, so too their duty demanded that they act as a buffer between the capital and their people. Immediate loyalty was parochial, and the resulting low level of political allegiance to any one particular centre was quite in keeping with the mediating role and local bases of chiefs and administrators throughout most of Java's long history. To a Wiranatakusuma in Bandung or a Tjakaraningrat in Bangkalan the political traditions and bonds which mattered most were those between their dynasty and their region's inhabitants. Their duty was to preserve their family's position and protect the people from the ravaging ebb and flow of central forces. Motives such as these, and not only opportunism and fear, underlay the flexibility of the government *priyayi* during occupation and revolution.

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The *Pangreh Praja* remained the essential framework for government – the Japanese, like the Dutch, came to rely upon it for both administrative and political control. But as the war drew to its close the relationship between the *priyayi* and the political leaders of the coming Indonesian state was both tense and ambiguous. Mutual distrust remained. To many nationalists the officials seemed unreconstructed opportunists, harbouring affection for the House of Orange alongside feudal aspirations. The corps' moral authority was also

[6] According to the official Japanese *Kan Po,* of 67 *Bupati* appointments 35 were former *Patih* and 16 were transferred Regents; I am indebted to A. van Marle of Amsterdam for the *Kan Po* lists.

weakened by their understandable shortcomings during the occupation, when inflation and economic hardship, political uncertainty, and the disruption of routine rendered the officials both ineffective as administrators and vulnerable to temptation. Not only were they held to have failed as protectors of the people, but there were also those who had abused their position by corruption. Their prestige and charisma were also damaged by the contemptuous treatment they received from some Japanese officers. The doubts and suspicions with which the nationalists regarded the *Pangreh Praja* were returned: many officials regarded the politicians as inexperienced ideologues, whose extremist and derivitive doctrines could never encompass the complexities of administration.

The gulf between the two groups was dangerously wide: they needed each other, but there was no trust. Soetardjo Kartohadikoesoemo played an important part in bridging this gulf, as his reputation and contacts from the pre-war period combined with his ability to make him the natural *Pangreh Praja* representative in revolutionary councils. Following the proclamation of the Republic of Indonesia on August 17, 1945, Soetardjo became governor of the reconstituted province of West Java, while Soeroso was appointed to Central and Soerio to East Java. Wiranatakusuma, the ex-Regent of Bandung, became Minister of Internal Affairs.[7] Bureaucratic order and continuity were seen to be preserved, but as the Dutch returned and sought to re-establish their control the officials were caught between the NICA (Netherlands Indies Civil Administration) and the Republic. Both sides demanded *Pangreh Praja* 'loyalty'.

During the disturbed months following the Japanese surrender, officials were placed in an invidious position. They faced not only conflicting demands from colonial and nationalist regimes, but also local uprisings against their authority. In the 'social revolutions' of Tanggerang, Banten, Bojonegoro, Pati Pekalongan, Cirebon and Solo,[8] officials were attacked and power seized by religious or republican groups. The emotion displayed in these risings lay well in the tradition of hatred of *priyayi,* but organizations and ideologies bore witness to the impact of the Japanese experience and revolutionary aspirations. Such reactions were symptomatic of the deep disjunction between the civil service's style and image, and the heightened feeling, commitment to popular sovereignty and anti-Dutch fervour of the period.

Distrust of the elitist corps was more calmly expressed in its renaming in February 1946: it was no longer to be the *Pangreh Praja*, 'Ruler of the Realm', but the *pamong praja,* 'servants' or 'nurturers' of the realm. The officials were not to command, but like concerned parents were 'to lead and influence from behind' (*tut wuri andayani*).[9] The implied low profile was tactfully adopted by most *priyayi* during the struggles of 1945-49.

[7] Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution*, pp. 114-5.

[8] *Ibid*, pp. 332-69.

[9] The, Vol. II, pp. 170-2.

The evidence of the social revolutions, that at least some groups in some areas rejected *priyayi* authority, did not deter NICA from returning to the established strategy of using the *volkshoofden*. After the July 1946 decision to isolate the republicans by forming a federal state under Netherlands hegemony there was no shortage of former *Pangreh Praja* figures willing to become heads of state, ministers or high officials. In 1948-1949 the creation of the Dutch-sponsored states of Madura, Pasundan (West Java), Central and East Java forced a public statement upon officials: were they to be federalist or republican? After the republican victory those who had chosen the Dutch side were naturally regarded as traitors.[10]

Following the transfer of sovereignty in 1949 the Indonesian government had to move carefully in appointing its officials. Acceptability to the people and local leaders was of fundamental importance, outranking bureaucratic capability. There was strong feeling against federalists and those who had simply been *'absen dari revolusi'*, and had sat out the struggle. Except for the small minority with excellent political credentials, most *pamong praja* found it expedient to lie low and cultivate influential patrons. There was a gross and administratively unwarranted expansion of the government services as politicians strove to provide jobs, reward clients and obtain a following. Although successive cabinets expressed their alarm at the factionalization and runaway expansion of the administration there was little they could do. And indeed, the problems of independent Indonesia's bureaucracy – unwieldy, underpaid, inefficient, low in financial probity and morale – seemed insoluble precisely because the solutions were essentially political.[11]

The post-revolutionary *pamong praja* found itself under a new kind of government. No longer did it serve an ethnically alien, authoritarian regime centred in a foreign country, as had been the case under colonialism and occupation. Now Indonesians were in control through an unstable party system where the mobilization of cliques and, ultimately, votes was a prerequisite to political survival. The effects of this change were profound. The government needed the civil service and the officials had to carry out their instructions, but the relationship between the two was decidedly ambivalent: they were mutually dependent, but distrust remained. The political leadership was, after all, drawn from the *Pangreh Praja's* competitors, and there was still some doubt as to *priyayi* commitment to the new state. It was not merely that officials might be 'pro-Dutch', but more subtly that they, without being Orangist, would nonetheless remain neutral and refuse to recognize the new government's legitimacy. And indeed, their respect for parliament did seem to be low. Perhaps

[10] The, Vol. I, pp. 169-186; Schiller.

[11] D. Hadisumarto, 'The Indonesian Civil Service and Its Reform Movements' (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Southern California, 1974), pp. 153-160. Sewaka, pp. 80-320, gives a first hand *pamong praja* account of the revolution and events up to 1952. He was Governor of West Java for most of that period.

this was because of the regular cabinet crises, but perhaps also they were influenced by memories of the hobbled assemblies of the Dutch period, the Regency and Provincial Councils, and the *Volksraad.*

These colonial councils had been imposed from above, they were neither derived from nor responsible to the popular will. They were dominated by officials and were used as political window dressing – powerless pseudo-representative bodies whose main function was to legitimize Dutch rule and neutralize political activity. Such assemblies did not give the best preparation for democracy, but tended rather to encourage either a radical contempt for such pallid institutions, or an authoritarian nostalgia for bureaucratic oligarchy.

It was not only on the council question that the colonial past shaped attitudes after 1945. Indeed, the whole career of the *pamong praja* in independent Indonesia demonstrates the persisting relevance of trends and dilemmas created during the formative years of the old *Pangreh Praja.* The controversy over the role of the Republic's officials has a familiar ring, as it was dominated by the problem of identifying the dividing line between administration and politics. The similarity with the colonial debate was marked; as during the fifties and sixties, the same two questions were crucial to the discussion. Firstly, should officials be neutral, or should they actively promote political allegiance? And secondly, should local councils be subordinate to the *Bupati* or vice versa? In the following paragraphs the development of this controversy will be briefly sketched, without attempting to summarize complex political events.

The possibility of civil service mobilization of popular political commitment was an extremely sensitive issue, as there was some doubt as to the direction of the officials' own allegiance in the new multi-party system. Would they encourage loyalty to the abstract state, to a political creed, to individual parties, or to their own privileged position as a local ruling caste? Political leaders, both national and local, attempted to create, extend and activate clients and factions within the administration, while at the same time sharply criticizing other officials' partisan behaviour in favour of their rivals. The pride and ethos of the *pamong praja* protected it against some of the worst excesses seen in other departments, where appointment and promotion were linked to patronage and 'trading favours' weakened administrative norms.[12]

During the troubled time of the revolution, the Republic had maintained local government as it had been under the Dutch. However, as some stability returned, the continuing combination of the Regent as official with his role as Council chairman was questioned by the more democratic and populist parties, notably the PKI. In 1957 a new law was passed, sharply curtailing the *pamong praja*'s power and extending that of the councils.[13] Until then the civil service

[12] H. Feith, *The Decline of Constitutional Democracy in Indonesia* (Ithaca, 1963) *passim* and pp. 313-4, 368-372, 567-8; Hadisumarto, pp. 163-174.

[13] J.D. Legge, *Central Authority and Regional Autonomy in Indonesia; A Study in Local Administration 1950-1960* (Ithaca, 1961); G.S. Maryanov, *Decentralization in Indonesia as a Political Problem* (Ithaca, 1958); The, Vols, I and II.

had kept fairly aloof from the debate over its future. In 1950 the officials' union, the SSKDM (*Serikat Sekerdja Kementerian Dalam Negeri,* Union of the Ministry of Internal Affairs) had simply expressed its concern that existing rights should not be lost. But seven years later the officials saw that the threat was far more serious, and they responded accordingly; their reaction and arguments were very similar to those used by the BB when facing the 1922 reforms. In 1957 the Governor of Central Java flatly refused to co-operate, and members of his staff declared they could not be responsible for what might happen if the government persisted. The Governor of East Java, Samadikun, a career official with a progressive *Pangreh Praja* past, agreed with his colleague and so too did the Javanese SSKDN branches. All were well aware that the law would lower the corps' prestige and promotion chances, and leave it completely open to political control. In March 1958 a SSKDN seminar heard critical analyses of the law from Soetardjo and Samadikun, and the union formally urged its reconsideration. The SSKDN sarcastically summarized the rationale behind the law as follows: (1) democratization = collegiate government = abolition of the *pamong praja,* (2) maximum autonomy = no central officials or government representatives in the regions = transfer of all *pamong praja* authority, (3) other opinions = colonial = feudal = reactionary = opponent of democracy and autonomy.[14]

In 1958 the discredited parliamentary system in Indonesia was replaced by 'Guided Democracy', under the leadership of President Sukarno, who responded to *pamong praja* and Army pressure by reversing the 1957 law;[15] in 1965 the *Bupati's* position was further strengthened.[16] But this did not solve the civil service's problems. The intense jockeying for power exacerbated intra-corps factionalism, while officials' influence in rural areas was threatened by the expansion of both Army and PKI involvement in the villages. The army opposed the corruption and politicization of the *pamong praja,* while the communists attacked its arrogant elitism.[17]

In purely administrative terms the *pamong praja* was adrift and deteriorating. The struggle for survival drained officials' resources, party machine politics undermined morale, able men were 'kicked upstairs' to ineffectuality while Ministers placed their clients in key positions. Monthly salaries could keep officials alive for two weeks at best, multiple job-holding and illegal fee collection were widespread, responsibility was avoided as dangerous, and a growing number of useless employees distended the lower ranks. But the corps retained

[14] The, Vol. II, pp. 168-199.

[15] D.S. Lev, *The Transition to Guided Democracy: Indonesian Politics, 1957-1959* (Ithaca, 1966); Legge, *Central Authority,* pp. 201-229; J. Wajong, *Kedudukan dan Tugas Pamong Pradja* (Jakarta, 1972).

[16] The, Vol. II, p. 273, and on Law 1965/18 in general, pp. 252-275.

[17] Hadisumarto, pp. 177-180, 205; R. Mortimer, *Indonesian Communism under Sukarno. Ideology and Politics, 1959-1965* (Ithaca, 1974) pp. 126-132 and *passim*; The, Vol II, pp. 276-291.

prestige; it still ranked high in the Javanese status system, and during a period of high unemployment and extreme inflation its security and the distribution of necessities – such as rice, cloth and kerosene – to officials ensured an overwhelming supply of aspirant employees. Training schools and up-grading courses multiplied, 're-tooling' committees concerned themselves with ideological purity, people in power strove to stack the corps with followers, and so the civil service, once the key integrating institution in Java, seemed swamped by political priorities and tensions.[18]

On the night of 30 September 1965, a coup attempt ended the overwrought speculation and manoeuvering of 'Guided Democracy'. After a traumatic period of massacre and demonstrations President Sukarno was replaced by General Suharto, the PKI was hunted underground and a new military-dominated regime emerged – a New Order pledged to rational reform and development. Administration was dominated by the explicit obligation to help carry out the various development plans and the implicit duty to mobilize loyalty for the New Order. In 1970 the Minister for Internal Affairs, General Amir Machmud, brought the civil service firmly into line behind the government party *Golkar*, and developed the key concept of *mono-loyalitas*, stressing officials' exclusive loyalty to the government and Golkar; party membership was forbidden.[19] The civil service was to assist the army in maintaining stability – a post-independence version of the old *rust en orde*.

Economics had the highest priority in New Order programs and considerable headway was made in combatting inflation. But the financial drain and executive inefficiency of the bloated civil services also forced a restructuring and steamlining of the administration. This was an extremely complex task. There were too many employees (no one knew how many) but there was also grave unemployment, the service was knit into networks under political patrons, pay was ridiculously low, there were no acceptable sanctions against incompetent workers, and the salary and promotion structure rewarded neither hard work nor responsibility. Gradually these problems were attacked.[20]

The extension of Army control resulted in the appointment of many military men as *kepala daerah* (regional head, i.e. *Bupati*, governor). The new Law (No. 5 of 1974) on regional government followed the established system of having local assemblies choose a short list of candidates for the post of *kepala daerah*; governors were then appointed by the President, and *Bupati* by the Internal Affairs Minister. In reality the choice was to be firmly directed by the centre. The somewhat presidential aura surrounding the regional heads was

[18] Hadisumarto, pp. 163-170, 192-3, 206-213.

[19] M. Nishihara, *Golkar and the Indonesian Elections of 1971* (Ithaca, 1972) pp. 20-1 and *passim;* Samadikoen, 'Soal Pemerintahan di Indonesia sebagai alat/aparatur pelaksana Pelita (Pembangunan Lima Tahun)', typescript text of speech delivered at Malang, 26 February 1970; *Korpri: Korps Pegawai Republik Indonesia* (Jakarta, 1972); Hadisumarto, pp. 183-190.

[20] Hadisumarto, pp. 214-262.

reinforced by assigning them advisory bodies which included the Council chairmen and groups not represented on the Council.[21]

By the mid-1970s the *pamong praja* was not merely paralleled by the Army's territorial organization but usually subordinated to it. Officers in key administrative positions had access to military as well as civil resources; they also had the confidence born of physical power and a preoccupation with political conformism. But despite the new power constellation, for the *pamong praja* there were familiar elements in the situation; some older men may have been reminded of the relationship between *Pangreh Praja* and BB. Most European officials, like many Army men, had been brisk and occasionally insensitive visitors from an alien environment; both tended to give priority to maintenance of the status quo, productivity and the gratification of their superiors. Even the legal basis of the two regimes was much the same. Indeed, given the great changes of the last few decades in Java, it is surprising how many similarities remain between *Pangreh Praja* traits and contemporary administrative characteristics. Officials again served to maintain popular political obedience; Councils were again subordinate to men appointed by the centre – a uniformed *Beamtenstaat* in the making. There is no simple and absolute contrast between a 'rational' yet 'feudal' colonial corps and an 'irrational' and democratic *pamong praja*.

During the last 50 years or so of Dutch rule there had appeared to be considerable stability in civil service structure and ethos. Colonial theorists regarded the corps as an institution rooted in age-old traditions and still firmly at the apex of native society. In some ways they were right but, as we have seen, there were actually significant changes in the *Pangreh Praja*'s social composition, political role, administrative behaviour, personal values and life-style. Similarly, if we look behind the upheavals of the subsequent period – Japanese occupation, revolution, unstable parliamentary government, Guided Democracy and the New Order – we find continuities going back to the colonial period and beyond.

During the late 1950s and 1960s scholars such as Ann Ruth Willner and Benedict Anderson saw a tendency in Javanese political life to revert to patterns found in the pre-Dutch past. Neither, however, considered the colonial period as a bridge to and re-interpreter of indigenous values. In her description of 'the neo-traditional accommodation to political independence' Willner noted in the modern Indonesian bureaucracy features such as an over-riding concern with 'paper and *pangkat*' (rank) and a strong desire to avoid difficult decisions, confrontations or breaks with precedent. She characterized the officials as 'Janus-faced' in their dealing with foreign experts. Those who displayed appropriate behaviour earned the approving label of 'problem solver' not so much because that was their primary concern or achievement, but rather because they were able to use the alien experts' conceptual vocabulary.

[21] *Angkatan Bersenjata*, 3 July 1974.

Dr Willner ascribed this 'Janus-faced' quality to the re-emergence of traditional traits, and contrasted it with her image of the colonial bureaucracy which, under the impersonal rule of law, was 'a fair approximation of the Weberian model of legal-rational authority'. In fact, her description of 'neo-traditional' administration was far closer to *Pangreh Praja* reality than was the rational westernized model she assumed existed before World War II.[22] It should not be assumed that 'non-rational' traits such as the use of influence, peddling of patronage, intervention into apparently non-administrative matters while neglecting urgent bureaucratic business and the fear of decision-making, all derive entirely from past native practices. All these characteristics were also typical of the *Pangreh Praja,* with its uneasy and often dishonest relationship with the BB.

Benedict Anderson analysed the 'resurgence of patrimonialism' in Indonesian politics, but he too underestimated the extent to which the values belonging to his ideal-type of the Javanese state were also present in the colonial corps. The base-line for Anderson's comparison of administration under the Dutch and in the Republic was not the Weberian model of rational-legal authority but his own perceptive sketch of late colonial officialdom. He saw the *Pangreh Praja* as an essentially conservative force, defending the status quo not only because that was its function but also to protect its own position. Imbued with a strong pride in their past as an aristocratic governing class, the colonial officials combined arrogant elitism with an almost obsessive concern for bureaucratic forms, reflecting the stolid Calvinist work-ethic of their bourgeois masters. This image captured certain key characteristics of the later *Pangreh Praja,* particularly those features closest to the Netherlands norm, but it removed the corps too far from its roots and its reality.[23]

The native civil servants perfected the 'Janus-faced' technique long before the arrival of foreign experts: it was quite in harmony with Javanese conceptions of polite behaviour and it was also an absolute prerequisite for success in dealing with colonial society and the BB. In his characterization of the pre-World War II native officials Anderson illuminated the face they showed the Europeans but – except for the most Westernized members of the corps – his description left much of their indigenous or *mestizo* side in shadow. Many of the techniques in modern political behaviour which he saw as a return to ancient roots were, in reality, also present in the shadow side of *Pangreh Praja* routine in their contact with local society, but were not part of the keen and businesslike face they showed the Dutch.

[22] A.R. Willner, 'The neotraditional accommodation to political independence: the case of Indonesia' in L.W. Pye (ed.), *Cases in Comparative Politics: Asia* (Boston, 1970) pp.247-306.

[23] See Anderson's articles, 'The languages of Indonesian politics', *Indonesia,* 1, (1966) pp. 95-101; 'Japan "The light of Asia" ', p. 20-1; 'The idea of power', pp. 33-8.

Studies of independent Indonesia's administrators in their local setting also show strong continuities with the preceding colonial corps. M.P. Walker, writing of East Java in the late 1950s, commented that: 'When the typical Javanese villager thinks of rule, he automatically thinks of the *Bupati* . . . The atmosphere and tone of the relationship of the *Bupati* and his people is still steeped in feudalism'.[24] From the same period, Donald Fagg's study of the position of the *Camat* (Assistant *Wedana*), reveals close parallels with the *Pangreh Praja*. Fagg described the *Camat*'s function as diffuse, trouble-noting, co-ordinating, balancing factions, integrating and managing communication between groups. His task was to harmonize, to maintain the status quo and prevent unseemly disruptions. Fundamentally powerless, forced to cultivate the goodwill of his constituency, the *Camat* nevertheless found that social structure and expectations created and sustained an elaborate authority role which enabled him to perform effectively.[25] This was also very much the local *Pangreh Praja*'s role during the colonial period, and probably too that of local headmen before the arrival of the Dutch.

This is not to say that there was unbroken continuity through the Japanese occupation and 30 years of independence. There were tremendous changes. In their more discouraged moments many officials must have felt that they had entered the 'Time of Trouble' described in the old Javanese *Nitisastra*, when people become 'wild and quarrelsome for high positions. They do not know their own station . . . Contemptible actions are considered noble, and stupidity is called wisdom; the base are called honourable . . . The King becomes a creature of his ministers, and those with authority misuse it'.[26] Some older people referred to the colonial years as the *jaman normal*, the 'normal time'.

But in reality many of the *pamong praja*'s struggles had, albeit in much more muted form, also been present during the Dutch period. Then too the corps had been used to intimidate people into political orthodoxy, then too it had been in competition with critical politicians and Islamic spokesmen and under pressure from secret police and para-military agents of the government. Use of the *pamong praja* to mobilize support for *Golkar*, PKI attacks on the corps and crushing military supervision constitute extreme developments of earlier themes. Just as the Dutch had talked of *opheffing*, of raising up the 'brown brothers', so the New Order, in legitimation of its rule, stressed its commitment to development.

[24] M.P. Walker, 'Administration and local government in Indonesia', (Ph.D.Thesis, University of California at Berkeley, 1967), p. 292.

[25] Fagg, pp. 532, 536, 558, and *passim*.

[26] Translated in H. Feith and L. Castles (eds.), *Indonesian Political Thinking 1945-1965* (Ithaca, 1970) pp. 182-3.

It would be wrong, however, to underestimate the significance of the post-occupation integration of government and civil service. Once officials and politicians came from the same society and concerned themselves with the same constituents, the extension of patron-client networks into the political sphere was inevitable. Whereas once a native official's patron, subject of his fears and favour-seeking, was a *Bupati* or BB man, after the occupation he tended to be a member of the political or military elite. The formation of such networks had been common in the *Pangreh Praja,* but had been kept in check by a more impersonal, Dutch-dominated central establishment in Batavia. Similarly, corruption and the trading of favours had always been there, part of an indigenous tradition which made no clear distinction between personal and professional income and status, but it had had to be kept within bounds. With the removal of the hard re-inforcing presence of the Dutch, and the emergence of gross inflation and economic insecurity, corruption became common, just as political uncertainty encouraged alignment with powerful patrons.[27]

The colonial administrative experience both maintained and warped local political traditions and values. In order to bridge the discrepancies between European and indigenous expectations the officials became yet more 'Janus-faced', and as administrative rationalization and Western education increased the European dimension to their lives the officials moved further from the Javanese mainstream of the people they administered. The strain increased as new *priyayi* and budding nationalists queried the corps' social status and integrity. By the end of the colonial period there were intra-corps tensions between arrogant traditionalists and democrats, between well trained bureaucrats and *priyayi* functionaries, between the foes of nationalism and covert sympathizers. But these divisions were nothing like the bitter factionalization which followed the revolution and independence.

Pamong praja officials were caught in a world of conflicting expectations as regimes and individuals strove to formulate frameworks for political and social life in independent Indonesia. Officials were, at various times, under pressure to conform to plans for a socialist society or to accommodate to virtual military rule, and yet had to try and maintain rational bureaucratic norms while also playing the *volkshoofd* in isolated villages. The flexibility and chameleon qualities such situations demanded obscured continuities with the old *Pangreh Praja* and *priyayi* ethic. Yet when in October 1969 the graduates of the various Dutch administrative training institutes (OSVIA, *Bestuurschool* etc.) staged a reunion, men talking of the New Order's Five Year plan mingled with proud wearers of the *Orde van Oranje Nassau* and other colonial decorations.[28]

[27] T.M. Smith, 'Corruption, Tradition and Change', *Indonesia,* 11 (1971) pp. 21-40.

[28] 'Buku Kenang-Kenangan Reuni Alumni dan ex-Siswa Sekolah-Sekolah O.S.V.I.A./M.O.S.V.I.A./C.I.B.A./Bestuurschool dan Bestuursacademie Seluruh Indonesia di Djakarta 7 dan 8 Oktober 1969' (Jakarta, 1969).

In 1955 a Javanese official expressed his view of the *pamong praja*, setting it out in verse alongside a drawing of the puppet Kresna, the cunning and semi-divine strategist from the *wayang*. The poem compared the administrative *priyayi* to the warrior-seer, constant and still in the centre of battle. Though the world is in flux, the good official does not alter his aims, but is everlasting and steadfast in the midst of tumult.[29]

Undoubtedly this invocation of Java's mythic past was intended to evoke the noble and traditional aspects of the *priyayi* role, a continuing source of pride for officials. A more cynical observer, however, thinking in terms of *realpolitik*, could remark that aristocratic inactivity may well have seemed a safe reaction for men involved in situations beyond their control, subject to the vagaries of erratic superiors. Neither view in itself would do justice to the strength of tradition, or the adaptability of tactics and response displayed by the civil service during its long and difficult career.

[29] K.Ng. Soebakti Poesponoto, 'Wedjangan', *Pamong*, 1, v (1955) p. 5; I am grateful to R.M. Soeparto and Mohd. Ramlan for discussing and translating this poem.

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Heather Sutherland has an M.A. in Asian Civilizations from the Australian National University, and a Ph. D. in History from Yale. She is currently a Reader at the Free University in Amsterdam.

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